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Talmud.  
New edition of the  
Babylonian Talmud

V.8











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Talmud, English.

NEW EDITION

OF THE

# BABYLONIAN TALMUD

Original Text, Edited, Corrected, Formulated, and  
Translated into English

BY

MICHAEL L. RODKINSON

TRACTS TAANITH, MEGILLA, AND EBEL RABBATHI  
OR SEMÁHOTH

Volume VIII

NEW YORK

NEW TALMUD PUBLISHING COMPANY

54 EAST 106TH STREET

## EXPLANATORY REMARKS.

In our translation we adopted these principles:

1. *Tenan* of the original—We have learned in a Mishna; *Tania*—We have learned in a Boraitha; *Itemar*—It was taught.
2. Questions are indicated by the interrogation point, and are immediately followed by the answers, without being so marked.
3. When in the original there occur two statements separated by the phrase. *Lishna achrena* or *Waibayith Aema* or *Ikha d'amri* (literally, "otherwise interpreted"), we translate only the second.
4. As the pages of the original are indicated in our new Hebrew edition, it is not deemed necessary to mark them in the English edition, this being only a translation from the latter.
5. Words or passages enclosed in round parentheses ( ) denote the explanation rendered by Rashi to the foregoing sentence or word. Square parentheses [ ] contain commentaries by authorities of the last period of construction of the Gemara.

## A WORD TO THE PUBLIC.

WITH this volume Section Moed (Festivals), the weightiest and most difficult of the six Talmud sections, becomes complete. Students of the Talmud will observe that while the old edition contains twelve treatises, we have embodied thirteen, taking one—viz., Tract Ebel Rabbathi—from Section Nezikin (Damages), for reasons which will be stated further on.

Section Festivals contains all the Halakhoth (ordinances) pertaining to the Sabbath, to festivals, semi-festivals, fast-days, feast-days, and days of mourning, and stands practically independent of all other sections, inasmuch as we have been careful to cull all matter bearing upon the subjects discussed in this section from the other sections, and to insert the same in its proper place. (See Betza, p. 45.)\*

And now that by the grace of the Almighty we have succeeded in editing and translating an entire section of the Talmud, a work that, with due modesty, we can claim stands unique in the annals of literature, we deem it but fair to explain to our readers the method adopted by us in the accomplishment of this task, and demonstrate as well the innovations and changes introduced in comparison with the original, ancient edition. They are:

(a) In the original the name of each separate treatise alone indicated its contents, while the chapters into which such treatise was subdivided were known merely by the words with which they began. We have, however, headed each chapter with a line or two giving in succinct form the subjects discussed therein.

(b) Rashi's commentary, without the aid of which even students of the original Talmud cannot comprehend the intricate meanings of portions of the text, we have, wherever practicable, embodied *in* the text, denoting such commentary by the use of parentheses, and where this was not feasible on account of the

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\* This is only one instance where this policy was pursued. There are, of course, countless others, too numerous to mention.

vagueness of the phraseology and its inseparability from the text proper, we have made the commentary an integral part of the text.

(*c*) Wherever Rashi's commentary was insufficient or rather vague, and we were in consequence compelled to make use of one of the several other commentaries forming part of the original Talmud, we have added a footnote giving the name of the other commentator and the reasons for taking his opinion. (See *Erubin*, p. 211.)

(*d*) The frequent repetitions of discussions, some literally alike and others having a similar tendency even though employing a change of terms, occurring in the several sections and corresponding treatises, we have translated once only. We have been careful, however, to mark such places where a repetition occurs and is not embodied, giving the name of the treatise and the page where it can be found. In this section, now completed, we have also omitted some discussions which are repeated in treatises where they are more pertinent. There they will appear in due time, and where they are at present lacking, a notice to that effect will be found, and the place of their proper insertion is denoted. (See *Succah*, p. 48.)

(*e*) The original Talmud, with its innumerable biblical quotations, nowhere indicates where such biblical quotations may be found, simply stating: "It is written," etc. One savant named Joshua Boas went to the trouble of publishing a work called "Thora Or," in which he provides each biblical quotation found in the Talmud with its place in its respective book and chapter without naming the verse; but, either through misprints or negligence, they are for the most part incorrect. In our edition we give the book, chapter, and exact verse of each biblical quotation, as well as its correct form, as far as obtainable.

(*f*) We have, wherever necessary, made a footnote explaining the much-encountered Talmudic peculiarity of dividing up a word so as to put a different construction upon its meaning, and thus obliterate its actual linguistic purport. Wherever a word is totally untranslatable the fact is recorded and the word circumscribed likewise in a footnote. We have also had occasion to refer the reader, for the elucidation of some passages, to our previously published works, but in no case is such reference absolutely necessary.

(*g*) It has become necessary in some cases to provide a treatise with a special introduction or an appendix, or both, and

this we have done whenever it seemed to us to facilitate the understanding of such treatise.

(*h*) Wherever the Talmud made use of a Greek word, naturally in Hebrew letters, and consequently at times incorrectly, we have, to avoid errors, rendered the word into pure Greek. In a doubtful case we have appended a footnote giving the word in several versions and emphasizing the one most likely to have been the correct one. (See Erubin, p. 208.)

(*i*) While any index of subjects treated in the Mishna and Gemara is impossible for reasons we have already explained in the few lines heading the synopsis of Volume I., we have provided each volume with a synopsis of a sufficient scope to enable the reader to find any subject of peculiar interest to him without perusing the entire volume.

(*j*) Wherever two disputing Amoraim are not of the same period—on the contrary, were in existence a century or so apart—we have called the attention of the reader to this in a footnote explaining who the discussing teachers were, their probable names, etc.

(*k*) Whatever misprints occurred in the original edition of the Talmud we have carefully corrected, and have explained their probable origin and cause. (Erubin, p. 192.)

(*l*) The absence of commentaries to the tracts Shekalim and Ebel Rabbathi gave us an opportunity to add our own comment, which we have done with as much care and zeal as possible.

Finally, we call attention to the explanatory remarks printed on the reverse of the title-page of each volume.

Now it remains for us to state the reason why we embody the Tract Ebel Rabbathi in this section.

Maimonides tried to find some explanation for the sequence of sections and tracts of the Talmud, and whether he succeeded in this endeavor or not we will leave to the decision of the reader. At all events, as far as the Tract Ebel Rabbathi is concerned, he could not give any reason why it should have found a place in the Section *Nezikin* (Damages).

As a matter of fact, the Tract Ebel Rabbathi is not among the thirty-seven main tracts comprising the Babylonian Talmud, but is accounted one of the minor tracts written after the original was finished. Yet it would be decidedly wrong to class Ebel Rabbathi with the minor tracts, and for the reason that in a number of instances we find a passage in the Talmud reading, "We have learned in Ebel Rabbathi," proving conclusively that



it antedates the final completion of the original Babylonian edition.

The bibliographers Zunz and N. Bruell endeavored to prove that the Tract Ebel Rabbathi, so frequently mentioned in the Talmud proper, is not identical with the one found among the minor tracts, and Dr. Mielziner, in his Introduction to the Talmud, adds: "It seems to be a reproduction of the same with later additions." We do not care, as the Talmud says, "to put our heads between the mountains," and contradict these learned gentlemen, although they have not quoted by a good many all the quotations of Ebel Rabbathi used by the Talmud, and we have found that all quotations from Ebel Rabbathi are verbatim reproductions from the tract now before us. Be this, however, as it may, this tract is the *only* source in the Hebrew code from which the ordinances and laws pertaining to the mode of procedure with dying, dead, burials, and mourners, in vogue even at this day with all classes of Jews, emanate. Were we to leave this tract untranslated, the Section Festivals would be incomplete.

It must be borne in mind that laws pertaining to mourners are thoroughly discussed in one of the tracts of Section Festivals, Moed Katan, and hence our, we hope valid, excuse for embodying the Tract Ebel Rabbathi as part and parcel of that section. We wish to call attention to the fact, however, that such mourners' ordinances as had no connection with festivals and feast-days we have eliminated from the original tract in which they were contained, and have transferred them to Ebel Rabbathi, where they properly belong.

Having thus, in this introduction, outlined as fully as possible our method of disclosing the weighty contents of Judaism's greatest example of literature to laymen and those of the archæological students unacquainted with the idioms employed by the Talmudic teachers, we lay our work open to the critics and invite, in all honesty of purpose, scholarly, pithy criticism. So far we have only been favored with spasmodic efforts at criticism, consisting mainly of dissenting opinions as to the use of a term or the spelling of a word taken from the Hebrew and transcribed into English. What we would appreciate, however, is a fair and just summarizing of the work as a whole, of its value as such, and of its merit in facilitating the general knowledge among laymen, Gentiles and Jews alike, of ancient customs, ordinances, laws, and usages.

M. L. R.

NEW YORK, *June* 18, 1899.



A LETTER FROM PROF. DR. M. LAZARUS, GEH.  
REGIERUNGSRATH.

MERAN (AUSTRIA), d. 14 *Juni*, 1899.

HERRN M. L. RODKINSON, New York:

*Gehrter Herr Rodkinson*: In meinem Briefe vom 20. Juli, 85, habe ich meine Ansicht ausgesprochen, dass nur eine Verbindung von mehreren hervorragenden und bewährten Gelehrten den hohen Zweck einer neuen kritischen Talmud-Ausgabe vollkommen erfüllen könnten. Inzwischen haben Sie selber die Ausführung des Werkes nebst einer englischen Uebersetzung unternommen und bereits 7 Bände drucken lassen. Jedermann muss deshalb Ihren Muth und Ihre Ausdauer bewundern. Auf ein Urtheil, ob Ihre Uebertragung zutreffend ist, muss ich bei meiner bescheidenen Kenntniss der englischen Sprache verzichten; aber Ihr genaues Verständniss des Originals steht ja ausser Zweifel und an dem erforderlichen Beirath in Bezug auf die englische Fassung wird es Ihnen ja nicht gefehlt haben.

Jeder Schritt zur Verbreitung einer eingehenden Kenntniss des Talmuds auch im Kreise derer, welche die Sprache des Originals nicht kennen, betrachte ich als nützlich und werthvoll. Ich wünsche und hoffe deshalb, dass Sie zur Ausführung Ihres grossen Unternehmens reichliche Unterstützung finden mögen.

Mit hochachtungsvollem Grusse,

LAZARUS.



TRACT TAANITH (FASTING).



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# SYNOPSIS OF SUBJECTS

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\* See introduction to synopsis in Tract Sabbath, Vol. I., p. xxix.; also note at end of synopsis in Vol. V.

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# TRACT TAANITH (FASTING).

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## CHAPTER I.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE TIME WHEN MENTION IS MADE OF RAIN IN THE DAILY PRAYER, WHEN RAIN IS TO BE PRAYED FOR, WHEN FAST-DAYS ARE ORDERED ON WHICH TO PRAY ESPECIALLY FOR RAIN, AND THE CHARACTER OF SUCH DAYS OF MOURNING.

MISHNA: From what time should the power manifested in the descent of rain be commenced to be mentioned (in the daily prayer)? R. Eliezer said: "From the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles." R. Jehoshua, however, said: "From the last day of that festival." "For," said he to R. Eliezer, "since rain on the Feast of Tabernacles is considered unpropitious, why should it be mentioned in the prayers?" And R. Eliezer answered: "I do not mean to say that rain should be prayed for, but only that it should be mentioned with the words, 'He causeth the wind to blow, and the rain to descend in its proper time.'" "If so," rejoined R. Jehoshua, "such mention might be made at all seasons of the year."

Prayers for rain should not be said sooner than shortly before the commencement of the rainy season. R. Jehudah said: "The last of the ministers of the congregation who on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles officiates at the reading-desk should mention the rain, but not he who officiates first. On the first day of Passover, the minister who officiates first (at the morning prayer) should still mention it, but not he who officiates last (at the Additional Service)."

GEMARA: Whence does the Tana of this Mishna adduce that the rain must be mentioned or prayed for at all (in the daily prayer), that he commences by saying: "From what time should it be mentioned"? He adduces this from the Mishna in Tract Rosh-Hashana (New Year) where he has learned that on the Feast of Tabernacles judgment is passed concerning rain, and

having learned this, he proceeds to inform us when rain must be mentioned and prayed for. If so, let him teach us concerning the rain—why does he mention “the power manifested in the descent of rain”? Said R. Johanan: “Because rain descends with the power of God, as it is written [Job, v. 10]: ‘Who giveth rain upon the surface of the earth, and sendeth out waters over the face of the fields’; and further it is written [ibid. ix. 10]: ‘Who doeth great things which are quite unsearchable, and wonders which are quite without number’” (and rain is also included among these “great things”).

Whence do we know, however, that mention must be made of rain in the eighteen benedictions of the daily prayer? Because we have learned in a Boraitha thus: It is written [Deut. xi. 13]: “To love the Lord your God, and to serve him with all your heart and with all your soul.” And what service can be performed with the heart? The service of prayer, and immediately following the passage quoted it is said [ibid. 14]: “I will send rain for your land in its due season, the first rain and the latter rain,” etc.

R. Johanan said: Three keys are in the hands of the Holy One, blessed be He, which are not intrusted to any messenger, and they are: The key of rain, the key for a woman lying-in, and the key for the resurrection of the dead. The key of rain, as it is written [Deut. xxviii. 12]: “The Lord will open unto thee his good treasure, the heaven, to give the rain of thy land in its season”; the key for a woman lying-in, as it is written [Genesis, xxx. 22]: “And God remembered Rachel, and God hearkened to her, and opened her womb”; and the key for the resurrection of the dead, as it is written [Ezekiel, xxxvii. 13]: “And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I open your graves and when I cause you to come up out of your graves, O my people.” The sages of the West say, that also the key to a man’s earnings are in the hands of God alone, as it is written [Psalms, cxlv. 16]: “Thou openest thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every living thing.”

Why did not R. Johanan mention this also? Because R. Johanan may claim that rain itself is the means of earning a livelihood.

“R. Eliezer said: ‘From the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles.’” The schoolmen propounded a question: Whence does R. Eliezer derive his teaching? Does he derive it from the palm-branch which is brought along for use at the morning ser-

vice only, or from the pouring of water, which is brought also in the evening, as the Master says : " It is written [Numb. xxix. 24] : ' Their meat-offerings and their drink-offerings ' (in plural), that is to say, that they may be brought even in the evening, and therefore R. Eliezer holds that mention of the rain should be made even on the eve of the Feast of Tabernacles ? "

Come and hear : R. Abbahu said : " R. Eliezer derived his teaching from the palm-branch." Some say, that R. Abbahu had a tradition to that effect, while others hold that he takes it from the following Boraitha : From what time is mention made of rain in the daily prayer ? R. Eliezer said : " From the time the palm-branch is taken " (*i.e.*, from the time the morning-prayer is said). R. Jehoshua, however, said : " From the time when the palm-branch is laid aside " (*i.e.*, from the time of the Additional Prayer, when the palm-branch is not used). Said R. Eliezer : " Because the four articles \* of the Feast of Tabernacles are used only for the purpose of favorably inclining the judgment concerning rain ; and as those four articles cannot grow without water, neither can the world exist without water, therefore mention of rain must be made even in the morning." And R. Jehoshua replied : " But rain during the festival of Tabernacles is considered an unpropitious event ! " (because it prevents the sitting in the booth). Whereupon R. Eliezer rejoined : " I do not mean to say that rain should be prayed for but merely that it should be mentioned, and it is the same as the mention of the resurrection of the dead, which though this can take place only at the appointed time, it is nevertheless mentioned all the year round. Therefore if a man desires to mention rain in the prayer the whole year, he may do so."

Rabbi, however, said : " I say, that when a man ceases to pray for rain, he should also cease mentioning it." And R. Jehudah ben Bathyra said : " Mention of the rain should begin to be made on the second day of the Feast of Tabernacles." R. Aqiba said : " Even on the sixth day." R. Jehudah in the name of R. Jehoshua said : " The last of the ministers of the congregation who on the last day of the Feast of Tabernacles officiates at the reading-desk should mention the rain ; but not he who officiates first. On the first day of the Passover, the minister who officiates first should still mention it, but not he who officiates last."

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\* See Leviticus, xxiii. 40.

We have learned in a Boraitha : Our sages did not impose the duty on a man to make mention of the dew and wind in the prayer ; but if he desires to do so, he may. Why so ? Said R. Hanina : Because dew and wind are never withheld. Whence do I know this ? Because it is written [I Kings, xvii. 1] : " Then said Elijah the Tishbite, who was of the inhabitants of Gilead, unto Achab, ' As the Lord the God of Israel liveth, before whom I have stood, there shall not be in these years dew or rain, except according to my word ' " ; and further, it is written [ibid. xviii. 1] : " Go, show thyself unto Achab ; and I will give *rain* upon the face of the earth," but in the latter passage dew is not mentioned, because it was never withheld. It might be asked, however, why Elijah swore that it would not fall ? He meant to say merely that no dew which would benefit the soil would fall, for all the dew which should fall would not be productive of any good.

Whence do we know that the wind will not be withheld ? Said R. Jehoshua ben Levi : " Because it is written [Zech. ii. 10] : ' For as the four winds of heaven have I spread you abroad,' which signifies, that as the world cannot exist without winds, so it cannot also exist without Israel."

R. Hanina said : From what we have learned so far, we see that if a man said in his prayer during the dry season, " He causeth the wind to blow," he is not obliged to say his prayer over again ; but if he said " He causeth the rain to descend," he is bound to say the prayer again. During the rainy season if he omitted in his prayer the words, " He causeth the wind to blow," he need not be made to say the prayer over again, but if he omitted the words, " He causeth the rain to descend," he should be made to say the prayer again. And not only this, but if the man said in his prayer the words, " He causeth the wind to cease and the dew to vanish," he need not repeat the prayer, because those words are of no consequence.

We have learned in another Boraitha : The sages did not impose the duty of mentioning clouds and winds in the prayer ; but if a man chooses to do so he may, because they are not withheld.

R. Jehudah said : The wind which comes after the rain does as much good as the rain itself ; the sun which comes after the rain does as much good as two rains.

Rabha said : Snow to the mountains is as beneficial as five rains are to the ground, as it is written [Job, xxxvi. 6] : " For

to the snow he saith, 'Be thou on the earth'; likewise to the pouring rain, and to the pouring rains of his strength." \*

Rabha said again: "Snow is good for the mountains; a light rain is good for the trees; a heavy rain is good for the budding fruit, and a shower is even beneficial to the seed lying dormant in the ground."

Again Rabha said: "A young scholar is like a seed, lying in the ground, which, once sprouting, will continue to grow." And he said also: "When a young scholar appears excited, it should be known that it is his knowledge that is excited within him, as it is written [Jeremiah, xxiii. 29]: 'Is not thus my word like the fire? saith the Lord.'" And R. Ashi said that a scholar who is not as firm as iron cannot be considered a scholar, because the end of that passage reads: "And like a hammer that shivereth the rock." Said Rabhina: "Still, a man should train himself to speak calmly without anger, as it is written [Ecclesiastes, xi. 10]: 'And remove anger from thy heart.'"

R. Samuel ben Na'hmeni in the name of R. Jonathan said: Three men prayed to God for things that were not suitable (for prayer). Two were answered in a proper manner, but one was answered accordingly. They are: Eliezer the slave of Abraham, Saul the son of Kish, and Jephthah of Gilead. Concerning Eliezer it is written [Genesis, xxiv. 14]: "Be (she) the one thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac." Now, the maiden may have been blind or maimed, but still the Lord ordained it so that Rebekah was the one. Concerning Saul the King it is written [I Samuel, xvii. 25]: "And it shall be that the man who killeth him, him will the king enrich and his daughter will he give him," etc. It might have happened that a slave or an illegitimate son might have accomplished the feat, but still the Lord destined it to be David. Concerning Jephthah it is written [Judges, xi. 31]: "Then shall it be, that whatsoever cometh forth out of the doors of my house . . . I will burn it up for a burnt-offering." The prayer was improper, because an unclean thing (such as a swine or a dog) might have come forth which would not be a proper sacrifice, and the answer was also not proper, for his own daughter came forth to meet him. This causes the wrathful query of Jeremiah the prophet, as it is written [Jeremiah, viii. 22]: "Is there no more balm in Gilead? or is no physician there?"

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\* This is signified because in the Hebrew rain is mentioned five times in this passage—including snow.



(meaning was there not Pin'has the high-priest in Gilead, who could have released Jephthah of his vow?)\* And further, it is written [ibid. xix. 5]: "Which I had not commanded, nor spoken, and which had not come into my mind," which implies, "I had not commanded" refers to the sacrificing of the son of Mesha the King of Moab by his father [II Kings, iii. 27]: "now spoken," refers to the daughter of Jephthah; and "which had not come into my mind," refers to Isaac, whom his father Abraham was willing to sacrifice.

Said R. Berachiah: The congregation of Israel also prayed for an improper thing, but the Holy One, blessed be He, answered it in a proper manner, as it is written [Hosea, vi. 3]: "And let us feel it, that we may strive to know the Lord; bright as the morning dawn is his rising; and may He come as the rain unto us, as the latter rain that maketh fruitful the earth." And the Holy One, blessed be He, said: My daughter, thou askest a thing which at times is necessary and at other times is superfluous, but I will be to thee as a thing which is at all times needed, as it is written [Hosea, xiv. 6]: "I will be as the dew unto Israel." Once again the congregation of Israel prayed improperly, saying: "Sovereign of the universe! Set me as a seal upon thy heart, as a seal upon thy arm" [Solomon's Song, viii. 6], and the Lord said: Thou askest me to do a thing which at times can be seen and at other times cannot, for sometimes the heart is closed and the arms are covered; but I will set thee as a seal in a place that is always exposed; as it is written [Isaiah, xlix. 16]: "Behold, upon the palms of my hands have I engraved thee."

"*Shortly before the commencement of the rainy season.*" The schoolmen thought that mentioning rain in the prayer and praying for it was one and the same thing, therefore they said that this Mishna is in accordance with the opinion of R. Jehoshua, who said previously that rain must be mentioned from the time that the palm-branch is laid aside. Said Rabha to them: "Nay; this Mishna may even be in accordance with R. Eliezer's opinion, for mentioning rain and praying for it are two different things."

"*R. Jehudah said: 'The last of the ministers,'*" etc. Is this not a contradiction to what we learn in the next Mishna, namely: Until when is rain to be prayed for? R. Jehudah said: "Until

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\* Elsewhere the Talmud rebukes both Jephthah and Pin'has; Jephthah would not go to Pin'has because he, being a prince, considered himself the superior of Pin'has, while Pin'has, being high-priest, thought it below his dignity to go to Jephthah, and on account of this pride a human life was sacrificed.

after the Passover," etc. Said R. Hisda: "This presents no difficulty. Our Mishna refers to the *mention* of the rain, while the Mishna quoted refers to *praying* for rain, and rain may be prayed for during the entire Passover." Said Ula: "This statement of R. Hisda is as vinegar to the teeth and smoke to the eyes. If a man may mention rain even when he should not pray for it, why should he not when praying for it also be allowed to mention it?" Therefore, says Ula, this contradiction can be explained from the fact that two Tanaim differ as to the opinion of R. Jehudah.

R. Assi in the name of R. Johanan said: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Jehudah."

How shall *we* do, however, who have two days as the last days of the festival? (Shall we apply the Halakha to the first of those two days or to the last?) Said Rabh: "The rain should be first mentioned in the Additional Prayer on the first of the two last days, then it should be omitted in all prayers until the Additional Prayer on the second of those days, when it should again be mentioned." Said Samuel to those who repeated Rabh's statement: "Go ye and tell Abba this: 'Is it proper that after thou hast sanctified the day thou shouldst make it ordinary again? For in the afternoon prayer of that day thou hast omitted the mention of the rain.' Therefore I say that mention should be made first at the Additional Prayer on the first of the two last days, also in the afternoon prayer, then it may be omitted at night and in the morning of the following day; but it should be again mentioned in the Additional Prayer of the last day." Rabha, however, said: "As he once began to mention it, it should not be stopped again." And so also said R. Shesheth, and even Rabh retracted his former statement, for R. Hananel said in his name that twenty-one days should be counted from the New Year day the same as the ten days preceding the Day of Atonement are counted, and on the twenty-first day he should commence to make mention of the rain and should then not omit it in any of the prayers. So the Halakha prevails.

MISHNA: Till what time is the rain to be prayed for? R. Jehudah says until after the Passover; R. Meir says till the month of Nissan is passed, because it is said [Joel, ii. 23]: "And he hath caused to come down for you the rain, the first rain, and the latter rain in the first month."

GEMARA: Said R. Na'hman to R. Itz'hak: "Does the first rain then descend in the month of Nissan, does it not descend in Mar-Cheshvan? As we have learned in a Boraitha, namely:

'The first rains fall in Mar-Cheshvan and the latter rains in Nissan.'” And R. Itz'hak answered: R. Johanan said thus: The passage quoted in the Mishna, which states that both the first and the latter rains come down in the first month, refers to the time of Joel the son of Pethuel, when, it is written [Joel, i. 4]: “What the caterpillar left, hath the locust eaten,” etc. In that year the month of Adar had already passed, and the first rain descended in the month of Nissan. Said the prophet to Israel: “Go and sow your seed.” And they replied: “Should one who has a patch of barley or wheat eat it and live, or sow it and die (until the new grain becomes ripe)?” And he said to them: “Still, see that ye sow as much as ye can.” Thereupon a miracle occurred, and the grain which had been hidden in the walls and in the subterranean passages of the ants was discovered. They then went and sowed their grain on the second, third, and fourth days of Nissan. On the fifth of Nissan the second rain fell, and on the sixteenth of that month they already offered up the new grain which had ripened. Thus the grain which should have taken six months to ripen, matured in eleven days; and the offerings which were usually brought of grain that had been growing six months, were that time brought of such as had only been growing eleven days, and concerning this generation it is written [Psalms, cxxvi. 5]: “Those that sow in tears shall reap in joyful song.”

R. Na'hman said again to R. Itz'hak: “It is written [II Kings, viii. 1]: ‘For the Lord hath called for a famine, and it is also coming on the land for seven years.’ What was eaten during these seven years?” And he answered: “So said R. Johanan: In the first year they ate the reserve store that they had in their houses; in the second year they ate the reserve store they had in the fields; in the third they ate the flesh of ritually clean animals; on the fourth, the flesh of ritually unclean animals; in the fifth year they ate reptiles; in the sixth year the famine was so severe that people had to eat their own children; and in the seventh it reached a stage where some had to eat the flesh from off their own arms; and the saying [Isaiah, ix. 19]: ‘They shall eat every man the flesh of his own arm,’ was verified thereby.”

Again, R. Na'hman asked R. Itz'hak: It is written [Hosea, xi. 9]: “The Holy One in the midst of thee, and I will not come into the city.” How is this to be understood? Because the inhabitants did so much good in the city that they were called holy, and the Holy One did not wish to enter? And R. Itz'hak



answered: "Thus said R. Johanan: The Holy One, blessed be He, said that He would not enter the Jerusalem of the heavens until he could enter the Jerusalem below." "Is there then a Jerusalem above?" asked R. Na'hman. "Yea," was the answer, "for it is written [Psalms, cxxii. 3]: 'Jerusalem! which art built as a city wherein all associate together'" (*i.e.*, Jerusalem is built as that Jerusalem which is connected (associated) with it. Hence there is another Jerusalem, and that is above in the heavens).

R. Na'hman again asked R. Itz'hak: "How is the passage [Jeremiah, x. 8]: 'But at once shall they be shown to be brutish and foolish: it is a doctrine of vanities, it concerneth but wood,' to be understood?" And he replied: "Thus said R. Johanan: One thing will cause men to burn in Gehenna, and that is idolatry; for it is said above, 'a doctrine of vanities, it concerneth but wood,' and further, we find it written [ibid. 15]: 'They are vanity, the work of deception; in the time of their punishment shall they vanish.'"

R. Na'hman asked R. Itz'hak again: "What does the passage [Jeremiah, ii. 13], 'For two evils have my people committed,' mean? Are there only two, and the twenty-four which are subsequently enumerated\* (in the same chapter) were forgiven them?" And R. Itz'hak answered: Thus said R. Johanan: One evil which is considered as two—namely, idolatry—as it is written further [ibid.]: "Me have they forsaken, the source of living waters, to hew out for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that cannot hold water"; and it is also written [ibid. 10 and 11]: "For pass over to the isles of the Kittites, and see; and unto Kedar send, and consider well: and see if anything like this hath happened. Hath a nation exchanged its gods, which are yet no gods? and still my people hath exchanged its glory for that which cannot profit." In a Boraitha we have learned as follows: The Kittites worship fire and the inhabitants of Kedar worship water, and though knowing that water extinguishes fire, they nevertheless did not exchange their god, while my people exchanged their god for "that which cannot profit."

R. Na'hman and R. Itz'hak sat together at a meal, and R. Na'hman said to the latter: "Let Master relate something!" And R. Itz'hak said: "So said R. Johanan: 'While eating one should not talk, lest the food enter the windpipe (trachea) before

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\* According to the commentary of Rabbenu Hananel there are altogether twenty-six evils, committed by the Israelites, enumerated in Jeremiah ii.

the gullet and inflict an injury.'” After having finished their meal, he said: “So said R. Johanan: ‘Jacob our father never died.’” And R. Na’hman rejoined: “Then was it in vain that he was mourned and embalmed?” And R. Itz’hak replied: “I make this assertion from the following passage [Jeremiah, xxx. 10]: ‘And thou, do not fear, O my servant Jacob, saith the Lord, and be not dismayed, O Israel; for, behold, I will save thee from afar, and thy seed from the land of their captivity; and Jacob shall return, and shall be at rest, and be secure, with none to terrify him.’ And Jacob is compared to his children; as the latter are still living so is he also.” \*

When R. Na’hman and R. Itz’hak were about to part, the former said to R. Itz’hak: “Bless me.” And he answered: “I shall tell thee a parable to which this can be compared: A man once went into the desert, and when hungry, thirsty, and tired came to a tree bearing luscious fruit and affording plenty of shade, and underneath which there was a spring of water. He ate of the fruit, drank of the water, and rested beneath the shade. When about to leave he turned to the tree and said: ‘Tree, tree, where-with can I bless thee? That thy fruit may be sweet—it is already sweet; that thou shouldst afford plenty of shade—that also thou dost; that a spring may be near thee—even that thou hast. The one thing left me which I can wish for thee is, that all trees planted from thy seed may be as fruitful as thou art.’ So it is with thee. Should I bless thee with knowledge—that thou hast; should I bless thee with riches—that thou also hast; should I bless thee with children—even children thou lackest not; hence all I can wish thee is that thy seed be as prosperous as thou art.”

The rabbis taught: Why is the first rain called *Yorah*?† Because it teaches the people to paint their roofs, take in the fruit, and otherwise prepare for the winter; and also because it satiates the earth and penetrates into the very depths, as it is written [Psalms, lxxv. 11]: “Watering her furrows abundantly; smoothing down her ridges, thou softenest her with showers; thou blessest her growth.” Another thing that is meant by “*Yorah*” is “a rain that comes without storm”; and as the first rain is intended for a blessing, so also is the latter rain. And whence do we know that the first rain is intended for a blessing?

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\* The commentary of Tospath says that it is a noteworthy fact that while the Scriptures state that Abraham and Isaac died, they say that Jacob “departed this life” [Gen. xlix. 33].

† In addition to *Yorah*, meaning the first rain, it also means to show or to teach.

From the passage [Joel, ii. 23]: "And ye children of Zion, be glad, and rejoice in the Lord your God; for he hath given you the first rain in beneficence, and he hath caused to come down for you the rain, the first rain and the latter rain in the first month."

The rabbis taught: The first rain falls in the month of Mar-Cheshvan and the latter rain in Nissan. Whence do we know that the first rain should fall in the month of Mar-Cheshvan, perhaps it would do if it fell in the month of Kislev? Because the first and latter rains are mentioned together and by the latter rain is meant that falling in Nissan; for otherwise it would be of no benefit. Hence by the first rain is meant that falling in Mar-Cheshvan. In another Boraitha it is added that such is the dictum of R. Meir; but the sages say: "The first rain falls in Kislev." Who are those sages? Said R. Hisda: That is R. Jose, who says, in another Boraitha, that the time for the first rain is the third day of Mar-Cheshvan; ordinarily it falls on the 7th of that month, and if it is delayed it falls on the 17th. Such is the dictum of R. Meir. But R. Jehudah says the three dates are the 7th, 17th, and 23d, and R. Jose says they are the 17th, the 23d, and the 1st of Kislev; and he added that fasting for rain is not necessary until the 1st of Kislev has passed without rain having fallen. Said R. Hisda: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Jose."

Ameimar taught the same as R. Hisda with reference to another Boraitha: We have learned: As early as the 3d of Mar-Cheshvan, rain should be prayed for. R. Gamaliel said: "On the 7th of that month is the time when the delayed rain should be prayed for." Said R. Hisda: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Gamaliel."

According to whom will the following Boraitha be? We have learned: R. Simeon ben Gamaliel said: "If there was rain for seven consecutive days it must not be considered as too much rain, but merely that there was a threefold fructification of the earth by the rain." (This will be according to R. Jose, who said that seven days elapse between each fructification, and R. Hisda said the Halakha prevails according to R. Jose.) Said R. Abbahu: "Why is it called fructification? Because it fructifies the earth; for R. Jehudah said that the rain is the husband of the earth, as it is written [Isaiah, lv. 10]: 'For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven, and return not thither, but water the earth, and render it fruitful, and cause it to bring forth plants.'"

R. Abbahu said again : " The first fructification takes place if the rain penetrates one span into the ground, and the second fructification is accomplished when the soil is so pliable that it can be used to stop up a barrel without the addition of other water."

R. Hisda said : " If at the first fructification the soil becomes so pliable that it can be used to stop up a barrel, it cannot be considered as if the heavens were closed (and no rain had fallen)." He said again : " If it rained in some cities, but was dry in others, it cannot be said that the heavens are closed." This is not so ! For is it not written [Amos, iv. 7] : " And I also had indeed withholden from you the rain, when it was yet three months to the harvest ; and I caused it to rain upon one city, and upon another city I caused it not to rain ; one piece of land was rained upon, and another piece whereupon it rained not became dried up." And R. Jehudah said, in the name of Rabh, that the entire verse was in the form of a curse ? This presents no difficulty. For the verse signifies that in one city it will rain too much and in another it will not rain at all, which is a curse ; but if it rain ordinarily in one city and not at all in another (one city can draw its supply from the other). Said R. Ashi : " This very thing may be inferred from the passage itself ; for it says ' one piece of land was rained *upon*,' and that implies that in that piece of land there will be too much rain." \*

R. Abbahu said : " The day of rain is of more importance than the day of resurrection ; for on the latter day only the righteous will arise from the dead, but rain falls for all alike, righteous and wicked." And R. Abbahu differs with R. Jose, who declares that the day of rain is just as important as the day of resurrection, and for that reason is mentioned in the prayer at the benediction regarding the resurrection of the dead.

R. Jehudah said : " The day of rain is as important as the day on which the Law was given, because it is written [Deut. xxxii. 2] : ' My doctrine shall drop as the rain,' and by doctrine is meant the Law ; for it is written [Proverbs, iv. 2] : ' For good doctrine do I give you : my law must ye not forsake.' " And Rabha said : " The day of rain is even more important than the day on which the Law was given ; for it says : ' My doctrine shall drop as the rain,' and surely the thing upon which another is

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\* The benediction on rain is transferred from here to Tract Berachoth, as the proper place.



dependent, or to which another is compared, is more important than that other."

The same interpreters cite the following contradiction: It is written [Deut. xxxii. 2]: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew." In the first he says "rain," and in the other "dew." (It is said above that dew is always good, but with rain the case is different?) From this it is to be signified that if the scholar is a conscientious man, consider him as dew, which is always useful; but if he is not, turn your neck to him \* as we do to rain.

We have learned: R. Banaha said: "He who studies the Law for the honor of God, his knowledge becomes to him the elixir of life, as it is written [Proverbs, iii. 18]: 'A tree of life is she to those that lay hold on her'; and it is also written [ibid. 8]: 'It will be healing to thy body'; while, further, it is said [ibid. viii. 35]: 'For he who findeth me, findeth life'; but he who studies the Law, not for the honor of God (but in order to injure others or for other purpose), his knowledge becomes to him a deadly poison." As it is written in the passage just quoted, the term *Yaaroph* is to be interpreted as the term *Vearphu* [Deut. xxi. 4]: "And they shall *break* there the neck of the heifer in the valley."

R. Jeremiah said to R. Zera: "Let Master go and teach." And he answered: "My heart is weak, and I cannot." "Then let Master relate some trifling thing from the Haggada," said R. Jeremiah. And R. Zera spoke: "Thus said R. Johanan: 'It is written [Deut. xx. 19]: 'The man is a tree of the field.'" Is then a man a tree of the field? The passage says previously: 'For of them mayest thou eat, and thou shalt not cut them down'; and further, it says [ibid. 20]: 'Only those trees of which thou knowest that they are not fruit-trees, thou mayest destroy and cut down.' And this implies that the man is compared to a tree, and that if thou knowest a man to be a scholar and a good man, thou shouldst enjoy his company and derive benefit from him; but if he be a scholar but an evil man, thou shouldst avoid him and cut off thy intercourse with him."

R. Hama bar Hanina said: "It is written [Proverbs, xxvii. 17]: 'Iron is sharpened by iron,' and this applies to two scholars who study together, when one sharpens the intellect of the other."

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\* The Hebrew term for this is *arpehu*, the term in the beginning of the passage quoted is *yaaroph*, the term for "neck" in Hebrew is *aroph*; hence the explanation according to Samuel Eidlis, which is more proper here than Rashi's.

Rabba bar bar Hana said: Why were the words of the Law compared to fire, as it is written [Jeremiah, xxiii. 29]: "Is not this my word like the fire? saith the Lord." As fire cannot burn without having hold of an object, so the words of the Law cannot remain with one who is alone.

R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak said: Why are the words of the Law compared to a tree, as it is written [Proverbs, iii. 18]: "A tree of life is she to those that lay hold on her." As a small piece of wood kindles a larger, so a lesser scholar brightens the wits of the greater by his queries, and this is as R. Hanina has said: "I have learned much from my teachers, more from my colleagues, and most of all from my disciples."

R. Hanina bar Papa cited a contradiction: "It is written [Isaiah, xxi. 14]: 'Toward him that is thirsty they *bring* water'; and further, it is written [ibid. lv. 1]: 'Every one of ye that thirsteth, *come* ye to the water'?" (This presents no difficulty.) If a man is a diligent disciple and cannot come to the master, the master should go to him; but if he is not a diligent disciple, the master need not go to him, but if he comes to the master he should be taught.

R. Hanina bar Hama cited another contradiction: It is written [Proverbs, v. 16]: "So will thy springs *overflow* abroad"; and further, it is said [ibid. 17]: "They will be *thy own* only"? This means to say, that if a man is a thorough scholar his teachings should be allowed to spread abroad; but if not, they should be for him alone.

R. Hanina bar Idi said: Why are the words of the Law compared to water, as it is written [Isaiah, xxi. 14]: "Toward him that is thirsty they bring water"? Because as water leaves a higher place for a lower, so the words of the Law cannot be retained by one who does not deport himself in a lowly (humble) manner.

R. Oshiya said: Why are the words of the Law compared to the following three beverages—water, wine, and milk? "To water," as it's written in the verse just quoted; to "wine and milk," as it is written [Isaiah, lv. 1]: "Yea, come, buy without money and without price wine and milk." In order to teach us, that as those three beverages can best be kept in common utensils such as wooden or earthen vessels, so the Law can only be retained by those who are humble in their manner. As the daughter of the Cæsar once said to R. Jehoshua b. Hananiah: "Alas for such handsome wisdom, which is in an ugly vessel" (it means that the

rabbi was very homely). And he said to her: "In what does your father keep his best wine?" And she answered: "In earthen vessels." And he rejoined: "Then what is the difference between your father and a commoner?" And she asked: "In what, then, shall it be kept?" And he said: "You, who are wealthy and mighty, ought to keep it in golden and silver vessels!" She then told her father, and he commanded that his wine should be kept in vessels of gold and silver. And it became sour. When the Cæsar was informed of this, he asked his daughter: "Who told you that we should keep our wine in golden vessels?" And she named the above rabbi. He was sent for, and questioned as to the reason of his advice. And he rejoined: "This was only an answer to the question of the princess." "But are there not," the Cæsar said, "men who are handsome and nevertheless are very scholarly?" "Believe me," said the rabbi, "that if they would be homely, their wisdom would be greater still."

R. Hama bar Hanina said: The day of rain is of equal importance with the day on which heaven and earth were created, as it is written [Isaiah, xlv. 8]: "Drop down, ye heavens, from above and let the skies distil blessing; let the earth open, and let them all be fruitful of prosperity, and let righteousness spring up likewise: I the Lord have created it." And as it is said "created *it*" and *not* "created *them*," it proves that rain is referred to; (and hence the day of rain is equally as important as the day of the creation of the heavens and earth).

R. Oshiya said: The day of rain is so great that, even if a man be blessed with prosperity, the prosperity becomes more fruitful, as it is said in the verse quoted: "Let the earth open, and let them all be fruitful of prosperity."

R. Tanhum bar Hanilai said: "Rain does not descend unless the sins of Israel are forgiven, as it is written [Psalm lxxxv. 2-3]: 'Thou hast been favorable, O Lord, unto thy land; thou hast brought back the captivity of Jacob. Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people; thou hast covered over all their sin. Selah.'" Said Zeiri of Dehabath to Rabina: "Ye learn this from the above passage. We, however, apply to this the following: [I Kings, viii. 34]: 'Then hear thou in heaven, and forgive the sin,'" etc. R. Tanhum the son of R. Hyya of the village Acco said: "Rain is not withheld unless the enemies of Israel (meaning Israel itself) deserve to be destroyed, as it is written [Job, xxiv. 19]: 'Drought and heat speedily consume the snow-waters:

so doth the grave those who have sinned.'” Said Zeiri of Dehabath to Rabina: “Ye learn this from the above passage. We, however, apply to this the following [Deut. xi. 17]: ‘And he will shut up the heavens . . . and ye shall perish quickly.’”

R. Simeon ben Pazi said: “Rain is not withholden except from such as slander each other, as it is written [Proverbs, xxv. 23]: ‘The north wind bringeth forth rain; so doth secret talking, angry countenances.’”

R. Sala said in the name of R. Hamnuna: “Rain is withholden only on account of the impudent, as it is written [Jerem. iii. 3]: ‘And though the early showers were withholden, and the latter rain came not: yet hadst thou a forehead of an adulterous wife, thou refusedst to feel shame.’”

R. Sala said again in the name of R. Hamnuna: “The man who is impudent will finally stumble into idolatry.” And he derives it from the passage just quoted, “Yet hadst thou a forehead of an adulterous wife.” And R. Na’hman said: “An impudent man must be considered as having already stumbled into idolatry; for the passage does not say, ‘thou *wilt have* a forehead,’ etc., but ‘thou *hadst*.’”

Rabba bar Huna said: “An impudent man may be classed with the wicked, as it is written [Proverbs, xxi. 29]: ‘A wicked man showeth impudence in his face.’” And R. Na’hman bar Itz’hak said: “He may even be hated, as it is written [Eccles. viii. 1]: ‘And the boldness of his face Yesuna (will be lessened)’ Do not read ‘Yesuna’ (will be lessened) but ‘Yisonei’ (may be hated).”

R. Joseph said: Rain is withholden only for abolishing the Law, as it is written [Job, xxxvii. 21]: “Yet men see not the light which is bright in the skies, when the wind hath passed along and purified them.” By *light* is meant the Law, as it is written [Prov. vi. 23]: “For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light”; and *bright*, the disciples of R. Ishmael interpret thus: “Even when the sky was spotted with clouds, the wind of the law clears them away.”

R. Ami said: Rain is withholden solely on account of the sin of robbery, as it is written [Job, xxxvi. 32]: “His hands he covereth with light.” By “his hands” is meant the hands of robbery, as it is written [Jonah, iii. 8]: “And from the violence which is in their hands”; and by “light” is meant rain, as it is written [Job, xxxvii. 11]: “He scattereth the cloud of his lightning.”



R. Ami said again : It is written [Eccles. x. 10] : " If the iron be blunt and man do not whet the edge, then must he exert more strength ; but the advantage of making it properly sharp is wisdom," which signifies, that if the heavens became closed as the " iron is blunt," it was because of the persistent wickedness of the men who " did not whet the edge " (of righteousness). What is the remedy for the evil ? Praying for mercy, as it is said : " Then must he exert more strength " ; and so much the more will they be granted mercy if at the beginning their deeds were those of wisdom.

Resh Lakish said : If thou shouldst see a scholar whose mind is blunt as iron, because of unsystematic study, the remedy for him is, that he should devote more time to systematic study in the colleges, as it is said : " Then must he exert more strength." And a better remedy yet is, if he arrange all he had hitherto learned in order, as Resh Lakish would arrange his studies forty times before entering into the presence of R. Johanan [deriving it from the forty days which Moses occupied in receiving the Law on Mount Sinai]. R. Ada bar A'hbah would arrange his studies twenty-four times before entering into the presence of Rabha [deriving it from the twenty-four books of the Scriptures.]

Rabha said : " If thou shouldst see a disciple whose mind is as blunt as iron because his teacher does not thoughtfully explain the teachings to him, the remedy for him is, to request his friends to intercede for him with the teacher in order that the explanations may be more lucid and especially if the disciple's behavior is proper towards the teacher and others." \*

R. Ami said again : It is written [Eccles. x. 11] : " If the serpent do bite because no one uttered a charm, then hath the man that can use his tongue (in charming) no preference," which signifies that if thou shouldst see a generation in whose time the heavens became firm as copper and would not give forth dew and rain, because there was no one to utter a silent prayer for rain, the remedy is to obtain someone who can pray silently for the removal of the curse. And if the one who is able will not pray, what benefit will he derive from it ? hence it is more than probable that he will do so. If, however, he persist in refusing, the most pious of that generation should be appealed to. And

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\* The above teachings of R. Ami, Resh Lakish, and Rabha are all based upon the one passage—Ecclesiastes, x. 10 ; but the interpretations of several of the words contained therein are so diversified that we have deemed it advisable merely to render their teachings alone, without reference to the literal text of the verse.

if he did pray and was answered, and because of that he becomes too proud, he brings down wrath upon the world.

Rabha said: Two scholars who reside in one town and are not agreeable to each other in Halakha, they cause wrath and bring the same down as it is written [Job, xxxv. 33].

Resh Lakish said: It is written [Eccl. x. 11]: "If the serpent do bite because no one uttered a charm, then hath the man that can use his tongue (in charming) no preference." In the future all the wild beasts will come to the serpent and question him thus: A lion presses and eats, the wolf tears and eats; but thou, what benefit dost thou derive from killing the creatures? And his answer will be: Do, then, the evil tongues derive any benefit?

Again R. Ami said: The prayer of a man is not answered unless he put his whole soul into it, as it is written [Lamentations, iii. 41]: "Let us lift up our heart with our hands unto God in the heaven." This is not so! For did not Samuel through an interpreter preach as follows: It is written [Psalms, lxxviii. 36 and 37]: "Nevertheless they prayed insincerely to him with their mouth, and with their tongue they lied unto him. For their heart was not firm with him, and with their tongue they lied unto him"; and further, it says [ibid. 38]: "Still he, being merciful, forgave the iniquity." This presents no difficulty. If a man prays alone, he must put his whole soul into it; but if a congregation is engaged in prayer and one of the members does not happen to be as devout as he should, the prayer is nevertheless heard.

R. Ami said again: "Rain falls only for the sake of those who are truthful, as it is written [Psalms, lxxxv. 12]: 'Truth will grow up out of the earth and righteousness will look down from heaven.'" And he said again: "Come and see how great are the men who have faith, and I know this from the story of the cat and the well; for if a man have faith in a cat and a well so much the firmer should his faith be in God." \*

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\* The legend of the cat and the well is not to be found in the Talmud proper, but the Aruch and Rashi relate it as follows: A youth of a patrician family while strolling through a forest chanced to meet a beautiful maiden with whom he fell violently in love. The maiden received his advances favorably: and he plighted his troth to her, calling upon a well standing near by and upon a cat which at that moment rushed past them as witnesses of his undying affection. Returning to his home, the young man in the midst of festivities forgot about his adventure with the maid of the forest and became betrothed to another maiden of a prominent family. He married her and in due course the union was blessed with a child. Not long after the child was born, its nurse accidentally let it fall into a well. Another child was born to them,

R. Johanan said: "He who justifies all his actions here below, is closely scrutinized by the Power above, as it is written [Psalms, lxxxv. 12]: 'Truth will grow up out of the earth and righteousness will look down from heaven.'" R. Hyya bar Abin in the name of R. Huna adduces the same teaching from another passage [Psalms, xc. 11]: "Which is like the fear of thee," implying that as a man endeavors to prove his fear of the Lord here below, so is he scrutinized as to his sincerity from above. Resh Lakish adduces this same teaching from the passage [Isaiah, lxiv. 4]: "Thou acceptest him that rejoiceth and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways: behold, thou wast wroth, for we had sinned on them continually; and can we thus be saved?" which implies that when we accept one who wishes to appear righteous before us, his sins are looked into from above and he is closely observed.

R. Jehoshua ben Levi said: "One who rejoiceth in his affliction brings prosperity to the whole world, because the last two words of the above-cited verse are 'Aulom Venosha,' which should be interpreted, 'the world will be helped.'"

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and one day, when the child was left alone for a moment, a wild cat carried it off and devoured it. Thus was retribution meted out to the youth who had violated his promise.

In Vol. VI., p. 64, of the periodical *Hakol* (the Voice) we published in an article an explanation of the above passage in the Gemara, as follows: "It is entirely unreasonable to assume that one could believe in a cat or a well otherwise than as a means by which God would punish an iniquity, and therefore it is highly probable that the words 'Huldah and Bor, meaning *cat* and *well*, originally were intended for 'Huldah and Deborah, the prophetesses of the Scriptures, and that simply a Dalel and a Heh were omitted in the manuscript. The Talmud generally treats prophetesses with but little consideration and regards their prophecy as of small value, for it says in Tract Megilla, p. 37, 'Greatness is not seemly for women. Two prophetesses we had and one was called Deborah (a bee) and the other 'Huldah (a cat).' It then continues to criticise their behavior in general; but still the King Yoshiyahu (Josiah) believed in 'Huldah the prophetess (see II Kings, xxii. 13 to 20) and Barak the son of Abino'am believed in Deborah (see Judges, iv. 8). Thus it would be far more reasonable to explain the above passage in the Gemara, not with reference to the cat and the well, but rather as referring to Deborah and 'Huldah, and say: If a man have faith in the prophetesses 'Huldah and Deborah, he should be so much the firmer in his faith in God." This explanation met with the approval of a number of the most orthodox scholars, but the well-known Rev. Dr. M. Mielziner, in a letter addressed to us, called our attention to the fact "that, were it so, Deborah would stand before 'Huldah in the above passage, having preceded 'Huldah in the chronological order of the Scriptures." In Tract Megilla Deborah really does precede 'Huldah, but we forestalled this query in that article by stating that in all probability 'Huldah was mentioned first in the above passage from the fact that a King (Josiah) believed in her, while a commoner (Barak) was the man who placed his faith in the prophetess Deborah.

Resh Lakish said: It is written [Deut. xi. 17]: "And he will shut up the heaven." When the heaven is shut up from giving rain, it is compared to a woman lying-in, who has all the pain of travail but cannot bear the child; and this is what Resh Lakish said in the name of Bar Qappara: The expression "shut up" is said about rain, as quoted above, and the same expression is used of a woman [Gen. xx. 17]: "For the Lord had fast closed up \* every womb." It is said "birth" of a woman [ibid. xxx. 23]: "And she conceived, and bore a son"; and the same expression is used for rain [Isaiah, lv. 10]: "And render it fruitful," † etc. It is said "visiting" of a woman [Gen. xxi. 1]: "And the Lord visited Sarah"; and the same expression is used for rain [Psalms, lxxv. 10]: "Thou hast visited ‡ the earth and waterest her abundantly; thou greatly enrichest her; the brook of God is full of water."

In the days of R. Samuel ben Na'hmeni there were two evils in the land—famine and pestilence—and the sages said: What shall we pray for? We must not pray for two things, and we do not know which to pray for—the cessation of famine or of pestilence. Let us pray, then, for the abatement of the pestilence and we shall suffer with the famine. Said R. Samuel ben Na'hmeni to them: "Nay, let us pray for relief of the famine; for if the Merciful One will give bread he will give it to the living, surely not to the dead, and thus the pestilence will cease of itself, as it is written [Psalms, cxlv. 16]: 'Thou openest thy hand and satisfiest the desire of every *living* thing.'" Whence do we know that two things must not be prayed for? From the passage [Ezra, viii. 23]: "So we fasted and besought our God for this." Whence we see that if they besought God for *this*, there must have been something else besides, and only one thing was prayed for.

In the days of R. Zera the government issued proclamations detrimental to the interests of the Jews, and remarked that no fast-days were to be kept. Said R. Zera to the people: "Let us take a fast-day upon ourselves *now*, and when the government shall have rescinded its decree, we will then fast." And they asked him: "Whence dost thou know that this would be beneficial?" And he answered: "I know it, because it is written [Daniel, x. 12]: 'And he said unto me: Fear not, Daniel! for

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\* The Hebrew term for both is *Otzar*.

† The Hebrew term for both is *Holid*.

‡ Leeser translates in the first *visited*, and in the second *thought of*. The Hebrew term, however, for both is *Pokad*.



from the first day that thou didst set thy heart to obtain understanding, and to fast before thy God, were thy words heard: and I am come in consequence of thy words.'"

R. Itz'hak said: "Even if the years be years of drought, as were the days of Elijah, and rain fall on the eve of Sabbaths, it cannot be considered as a sign of blessing." Again, R. Itz'hak said: "The day of rain is such a blessed day, that even the coin in one's pocket is blessed; for it is written [Deut. xxviii. 12]: 'To give the rain of thy land in its season, and to bless all the work of thy hand.'"

R. Johanan said: "Rain is not withholden only on account of such men as promise publicly to give charity and then do not carry out their promise, as it is written [Proverbs, xxv. 14]: 'Like clouds and wind without rain, so is a man that vaunteth falsely of a gift.'"

R. Johanan said again: "The passage 'thou shalt truly tithe' signifies that a man should give tithes in order that he may himself become rich.† R. Johanan met a child of Resh Lakish (after the latter's demise) and he asked him: "How far along art thou in thy studies?" And the child answered: "I am at the passage [Deut. xiv. 22]: 'Thou shalt truly tithe,' and then asked, "What does that passage mean?" R. Johanan replied: "It means: Give tithe in order that thou mayest become rich." The child then said: "Whence dost thou know this?" And he replied: "Go and try it, and see if it is not so." But the child rejoined: "But is it then allowed to try God—is it not written [Deut. vi. 16]: 'Ye shall not tempt the Lord your God.'"

And R. Johanan said: "Thus said R. Hosea: 'In all things except tithes, for it is said [Malachi, iii. 10]: "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be provision in my house, and prove me but herewith, saith the Lord of hosts, if I will not open for you the windows of heaven, and pour out for you a blessing, until it be more than enough."'" Replied the child: "If I had already come to that verse (in my studies) I would not have needed thee nor Hosea thy rabbi."

Once more R. Johanan met the child of Resh Lakish, learning the passage [Proverbs, xix. 3]: "The folly of man perverteth his way and against the Lord will his heart rage." R. Johanan sat

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\* The other sayings of the same authority are transferred to tract *Baba Metziya* as the proper place, and some of them are repeated there.

† *Vide* Tract Sabbath, p. 252.

and pondered, saying: "Is there then anything written in the Hagiographa, of which there should not even be a hint in the Pentateuch?" Said the child of Resh Lakish to him: "Is there not a hint of this in the Pentateuch? Is it not written [Genesis, xlii. 28]: 'And their heart failed them and they were afraid, saying one unto another, What is this that God hath done unto us'?" (and was it not their own folly in selling their brother, that brought the sons of Jacob into their position)? R. Johanan (who had very large eyebrows—so large, in fact, that he had to lift them with silver pincers before he could see well) raised his eyes and wished to gaze at the child, when the mother of the child immediately took him away, saying: "Go away from him, or he may do unto thee what he did unto thy father." (What R. Johanan did to Resh Lakish is explained in Tract Baba Metziya.)

R. Johanan said: Rain may descend even for the sake of the merits of one man, but general prosperity comes only for the sake of the public, as it is written [Deut. xxviii. 12]: "The Lord will open unto *thee* his good treasure, the heaven, to give rain," etc.; and it is written [Exod. xvi. 4]: "I will rain for *you* bread from heaven."

An objection was raised: R. Jose the son of R. Jehudah said: Three good leaders were given to Israel, and they are: Moses, Aaron, and Miriam; and three good gifts were given through them, namely: the well of water which the Israelites had along with them in the desert was given them for the sake of Miriam; the pillar of cloud which led them by day was given them on account of Aaron, and the Manna was given them for Moses' sake. When Miriam died, the well vanished, as it is written [Numbers, xxi. 1]: "Miriam died there, and was buried there"; and immediately afterwards it says: "And there was no water for the congregation." Still, the well was again given to the children of Israel through the prayers of Moses and Aaron.

When Aaron died, the pillar of cloud left.\* Still, both the well and the pillar of cloud were returned for the sake of Moses; but when Moses died, everything vanished, as it is written [Zechariah, xi. 8]: "And I removed the three shepherds in one month." Did then Moses, Aaron, and Miriam die in the same month? Did not Moses die in Adar, Aaron in Abh, and Miriam in Nissan? Therefore infer from that passage that the three gifts which were given to Israel vanished in the same month that Moses died.

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\* *Vide* Tract Rosh-Hashana, p. 3.

Does all this not prove that the Manna was given solely on Moses' account? Nay; Moses prayed for the whole congregation, and thus he was equal to the whole congregation.

R. Huna bar Manoah, R. Samuel bar Idi, and R. Hyya of Vastania were disciples of Rabha. When Rabha died, they came to R. Papa. When R. Papa would say something that was not quite pleasing to them, they would wink at one another; and he became downhearted. At one time in a dream the passage just quoted: "And I removed the three shepherds in one month," was read to him. On the morrow before they left him he blessed the three disciples, saying: "The rabbis may go in peace" (not wishing that any harm might befall them).

R. Shimi bar Ashi was also a visitor at the college of R. Papa, and would put so many questions to him that it happened at times that R. Papa could not answer them. One day R. Shimi noticed R. Papa, who was reciting the prayer at which the face was generally hidden in the arm, and overheard him pray: "May the Merciful One save me from the disgrace which I suffer at the hands of that Shimi." So at that time he resolved to be silent and not trouble R. Papa any more with questions.

We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Eliezer said: The whole world drinks of the water of the ocean, as it is written [Gen. ii. 6]: "But there went up a mist from the earth and watered the whole face of the ground." Said R. Jehoshua to him: "How can that be? Are not the waters of the ocean salty?" And he replied: "They become sweet in the mist (when evaporating)." R. Jehoshua, however, says: The whole world drinks of the waters above, as it is written [Deut. xi. 11]: "From the rain of heaven doth it drink water." Thus the significance of the first-quoted verse is, that the mists rise unto heaven, open their mouths like bags, and drink in the water, as it is written [Job, xxxvi. 27]: "For he taketh away drops of water, which are purified into rain in the mist"; and the mist is porous like a sieve, through which the rain descends to the earth, as it is written [II Samuel, xxii. 12]: "Heavy masses of water, thick clouds of the skies," and the space from one drop to another is only the width of a hair. All this teaches us that the day of rain is as great as the day of the creation of heaven and earth.

The rabbis taught: The land of Israel was created first of all and the rest of the world afterwards, as it is written [Proverbs, viii. 26]: "While as yet he had not made the land and open fields," and the land of Israel was already made.



The land of Israel is watered by the Lord himself, while the rest of the world is watered by a messenger, as it is written [Job, v. 10]: "Who giveth rain upon the surface of the earth, and sendeth out waters over the face of the fields."

The land of Israel is watered by rain, while the rest of the world is watered by the residue remaining in the clouds, and this is inferred from the same passage [Job, v. 10], which also implies that the land of Israel is watered before the rest of the world.

R. Jehoshua ben Levi, however, said that the whole world is watered with the residue remaining after the garden of Eden had been watered, as it is written [Gen. ii. 10]: "And a river went out of Eden to water the garden"; and in a Boraitha we have learned that with the residue of water left over from a quantity necessary to water a Kur of land, a Tharqabh (one-sixtieth of a Kur) of land can be watered.

The rabbis taught: Egypt measures four hundred square Parsah, and that is only one-sixtieth of Mesopotamia; Mesopotamia is a sixtieth of the whole earth; the earth is one-sixtieth of the garden of Eden; the garden is one-sixtieth of Eden, and Eden is in turn only one-sixtieth of Gehenna. Thus it follows that the whole world is but a lid to the pot. Others say again that Gehenna is immeasurable, while still others maintain that Eden is immeasurable.

R. Oshiya said: "It is written [Jeremiah, li. 13]: 'O thou that dwellest upon many waters, great in treasures,' etc., which implies that the reason why Babylon is great in treasures is because it dwelleth upon many waters." Rabh said: "Rich indeed is Babylon, that reapeth her grain without rain." Abayi said: "I know of a tradition which tells me that swampy ground is better than dry." \*

MISHNA: On the third of Mar-Cheshvan prayers for rain should be said; but according to Rabban Gamaliel, on the seventh of the same month—namely, fifteen days after the Feast of Tabernacles—in order to give the last of the Israelites (returning to their homes from the city of Jerusalem, where they had been during the festivals) an opportunity to reach the River Euphrates (the northern boundary line of Palestine).

GEMARA: Said R. Elazar: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Gamaliel." We have learned in a Boraitha: Hananiah said: "In exile, prayers for rain should be said sixty days after

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\* This passage is in accordance with the explanation of the Aruch.

the equinox of Tishri"; and Huna bar Hyya said in the name of Samuel that the Halakha prevails according to Hananiah.

The schoolmen propounded a question: "What about the sixtieth day after the equinox? Is it included in the sixty days, or is it counted as one of the days on which the prayers are already to be recited?" Said R. Papa: "The Halakha prevails: The sixtieth is considered as the day after the sixty days."

MISHNA: If the seventeenth of Mar-Cheshvan have passed without the rain having yet descended, private individuals commence to keep three fast-days. As soon as it becomes dark on the fast-days, however, it is allowed to eat and to drink; and on the fast-days themselves it is permitted to work, to bathe, to anoint the body, to wear shoes, and to perform the duty of cohabitation.

If the new moon of Kislev has arrived without rain having yet descended, the supreme court shall order three public and general fast-days. As soon as it becomes dark on those fast-days, however, it is lawful to eat and drink; and on the fast-days themselves it is permissible to work, to bathe, to anoint the body, to wear shoes, and to perform the duty of cohabitation.

GEMARA: Who are meant by private individuals (in this Mishna)? Said R. Huna: "The rabbis." We have learned in a Boraitha that if private individuals commenced to keep the fast-days, they should fast on Monday, Thursday, and the following Monday; and they may interrupt their fast-days if a Monday or a Thursday fall on the day of the new moon or on such days as are mentioned in the Roll of Fasts.

The rabbis taught: "A man should not say: 'I am too young a scholar to be counted in among the rabbis, and thus be included in the meaning of the term "private individuals," hence I need not keep the fast-days'; but every young scholar should consider himself a rabbi for that purpose."

Who is called a private individual? One who is worthy of being elected Parnass (president) of the congregation. And who is called a young scholar? One who is asked concerning passages in his studies even in Tract Kalah and can make satisfactory answer.

The rabbis taught: Not every one who would count himself among the private individuals may do so, and not every one who would count himself among the young scholars may do so. Such is the dictum of R. Simeon ben Elazar. Rabban Simeon ben Gamaliel, however, said: "This only applies to those who do so

for the glory thereof, but not to such as only incur an inconvenience by so doing; and the latter, when counting themselves among such persons, should be favorably remembered therefor."

The rabbis taught: One who fasted on account of some trouble, or for the recovery of a sick person, even though the trouble had passed away during the day of his fasting, or the sick person had recovered during that day, should nevertheless continue to fast until nightfall. One who came from a place where there was no fast-day to a place where there was a fast-day must keep that fast-day; but if a man came from a place where there was fasting to a place where there was none, he must nevertheless quietly end his fast. If he forgot that the day was a fast-day, and ate and drank, he should not at least make it apparent to others, and should also not participate in any pleasures on that day, as it is written [Gen. xlii. 1]: "Why do ye look at one another?" which signifies, that Jacob said to his sons: Why do ye make it appear that ye are satisfied when the other races of Esau and Ishmael around you are starving?

R. Jehudah said in the name of R. Hyya: One who travels on the road should not eat much—no more, in fact, than is eaten in a year of famine. Why so? Here in Babylon they say: "In order that the stomach be not filled and thus make walking difficult"; but in Palestine they say: "In order that the supply of food which is carried along be not too quickly exhausted." The difference in the two opinions is therefore concerning a man on board of a ship. There is fear of the supply of food being exhausted, but not that walking will be hindered. On the other hand, the difference of opinion also concerns a man travelling from village to village. There is no fear of the supply of food becoming exhausted, but there is fear of overloading the stomach and thus impeding further progress.

R. Papa when travelling would eat a small loaf after traversing a Parsah, because he thought that eating too much would be injurious to the stomach.

R. Jehudah said in the name of Rabh: A man who has plenty in years of famine and still eats sparingly because others have but a small supply will be saved from sudden death, as it is written [Job, v. 20]: "In famine he redeemeth thee from death." Why is it said "in famine," it should say "from famine he redeemeth thee"? Therefore the passage means to imply that because one ate sparingly in times of famine, he will be redeemed from sudden death.

Resh Lakish said: "A man should not cohabit with his wife in years of famine, as it is written [Gen. xli. 50]: 'And unto Joseph were born two sons *before* the years of famine came.'" A Boraitha, however, teaches that a man who is childless may do so even in times of famine.

The rabbis taught: When Israelites are in trouble and one of them leaves them for the purpose of avoiding the trouble, the two angels who accompany each man lay their hands upon his head and say: "The man who secludes himself from the community which is in distress shall not see the prosperity of the community." Therefore a man should share the common distress of the community, as we see in the case of Moses, who always shared the troubles of the congregation, as it is written [Exod. xvii. 12]: "But when the hands of Moses became heavy, they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon." Did not Moses possess a pillow or bolster upon which he could have sate down? Yea; but Moses said thus: "Because the community is in distress I shall not use a pillow, but sit on a stone and share their woes." Thus everyone who shares the misery of the community shall also see the prosperity, and lest a man say: "Who will testify that I took no part in the woe of the community?" he should know that the stones and beams of his house will bear testimony to the fact, as it is written [Habakkuk, ii. 11]: "For the stone will cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the woodwork will answer it." The disciples of R. Shila say, that the two angels who accompany a man will testify against him, as it is written [Psalms, xci. 11]: "For his angels will be given charge concerning thee." R. 'Hidka said: "The soul of man will testify against him," as it is written [Micah, vii. 4]: "From her that lieth in thy bosom guard the doors of thy mouth." Others say that the members of a man's body will testify against him, as it is written [Isaiah, xliii. 10]: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord."

It is written [Deut. xxxii. 4]: "The God of truth, and without iniquity." By the "God of truth" is meant, that as retribution is meted out above to the wicked for every transgression which they commit, so are the righteous also held to account in this world for every transgression committed; and as the righteous are rewarded in the world to come for every little good act, so are the wicked rewarded in this world for every fulfilment of a religious duty, be it ever so insignificant. It says further [ibid.]: "Just and upright is He." Infer therefrom that when a man



comes into the world beyond, all his deeds are laid before him in detail, and he is told where and on what day he committed them. The man then answers: "Yea, I did so"; and he is told to subscribe his name, which he does, as it is written [Job, xxxvii. 7]: "He sealeth it on the hand of every man." And not alone this, but the man also exclaims: "I have been justly judged," as it is said [Psalms, li. 6]: "In order that thou mightest be righteous when thou speakest, be justified when thou judgest."

Samuel said: "A man who fasteth is called a sinner." R. Shesheth said: "If a young scholar sitteth and fasteth, may a dog eat his meal." Said R. Jeremiah bar Abba: "In the community in Babylon there is no fast-day except the 9th of Abh"; and in the name of Resh Lakish he said: "It is not lawful for a scholar to fast, because by fasting he diminishes the work in the heavenly cause."

"*As soon as it becomes dark,*" etc. R. Zera said in the name of R. Huna: "If an individual took it upon himself to fast the next day, even if he had eaten and drunk the entire night, he may on the morrow recite the fasting-prayer in the Min'hah (afternoon prayer). If a man, however, fasted a day and a night, he must not on the following morning recite the fasting-prayer." Asked R. Joseph: "What does R. Huna hold? That fasting at night is not considered and for that reason the fasting-prayer must not be recited on the following morning, or that fasting at night is considered the same as fasting for a few hours, but for fasting of the latter kind no prayer should be said?" Abayi answered: "R. Huna holds, that fasting at night is considered as fasting for a few hours, and for such a fast the prayer may be said; but the reason that he disallows the fasting-prayer on the morning following the night is because the man originally intended to fast only during the day and did not take upon himself previously to fast the night through also."

Said R. Hisda: "A fast of hours is considered only if the man had not tasted food until night." Said Abayi: "This would not be a fast of hours! it would be a regular fast-day?" R. Hisda means to say that if a man had not eaten before noon through lack of time, and then resolved to fast the remaining half of the day so as to have a fast-day to his credit—although he had only taken it upon himself to fast a half of a day, still it is considered as a regular fast-day.

R. Hisda said again: "A fast-day which was not kept until sunset cannot be called a fast-day." An objection was made:

We have learned in a Mishna: "The priests who had the weekly watch of the Temple fasted, but not the whole day." (This presents no difficulty.) In that case the men of the watch did not intend to fast, but merely to share the trouble of the rest of the community.

Samuel said: "A man who had fasted without having previously taken it upon himself to do so is not considered to have fasted at all." But what if a man did fast without having previously resolved to do so? Said Rabba bar Shila: "That is considered the same as inflating a bag with air." When must a man resolve to fast? Said Rabh: "On the preceding day during the time of the afternoon-prayer." And Samuel said: "On the preceding day at the afternoon-prayer."

Said R. Joseph: "It seems to me that the opinion of Samuel is correct."

The rabbis taught: "Until what time may a man eat on the night preceding a fast-day?" "Until the advent of the morning star." Such is the dictum of Rabbi; but R. Eliezer bar R. Simeon said: "Until the cock crows." Said Rabha: "This applies to one who had not slept; but if he had once retired and slept, he must not eat at all."

Abayi objected: "Did we not learn that if the man slept and arose again, he may eat?" That teaching does not mean if the man had slept, but had only slumbered.

R. Jehudah said in the name of Rabh: "A man, after taking it upon himself to fast on a certain day, may postpone that day and fast on another day; and," continued R. Jehudah, "when I told this to Samuel, he said: 'This is self-evident, for cannot a man vow to do a certain thing and postpone it to some other time?'"

R. Jehoshua the son of R. Idi was a guest of R. Assi; and a calf, the third of its mother, was prepared for him. And they said to him: "Let Master partake of something." Whereupon he replied: "I am fasting this day." And they rejoined: "Why not postpone this fast-day? Does not Master hold with R. Jehudah's decree in the name of Rabh, that a fast-day may be postponed?" And he said: "This is a fast-day to me on account of a dream, and Rabba bar Mahassia in the name of R. Hama bar Guria, quoting Rabh, said: 'A fast-day is to a bad dream what fire is to flax'; and R. Hisda said that the fast-day should be kept only on the same day, and R. Joseph said that even on Sabbath such a fast should be kept, and for the violation of the

Sabbath caused thereby he should keep an additional fast-day later on."

MISHNA: If these (three fast-days) have passed without their prayers having been favorably answered, the supreme court shall decree three more public and general fasts; on the nights preceding these it is not permitted to eat or drink, and on the fast-days it is prohibited to work, to bathe, to anoint the body, to wear shoes or to perform the duty of cohabitation, and the public bathing places are to be closed. Should even these fast-days have passed without their prayers having been favorably answered, then shall the Beth Din decree seven more fast-days, which altogether will make thirteen public and general fasts. These last seven fast-days differ from the preceding six, in that on them the alarm is sounded; the shops remain closed, excepting that on Mondays, towards evening, the shop-shutters (of the dealers in articles of food) may be loosely fastened (*i.e.*, not entirely closed, but in a slanting position), and on Thursday they may be taken off entirely in honor of the Sabbath.

Should even these seven fast-days have passed without a favorable answer to the prayers, the people are to avoid and withdraw from engaging in any joyous occupation, and also to diminish their business; from the erection of buildings and from the planting of pleasure-gardens; from betrothals, weddings, and mutual greetings, like men who are rebuked by the Omnipotent; (pious) private individuals recommence fasting till the end of the month of Nissan. If Nissan had passed and then rain descended, it must be considered a curse, for it is written [I Samuel, xii. 17]: "Is it not wheat harvest to-day?" etc.

GEMARA: It would be right to prohibit bathing, anointing the body, etc., on the fast-day, because those things are luxuries; but why should working be prohibited? Surely working cannot be considered a luxury! Said R. Hisda in the name of R. Jeremiah bar Abba: It is written [Joel, i. 14]: "Sanctify ye a fast, proclaim a solemn assembly, gather the elders," etc. Thus we see that it says, "Proclaim a solemn assembly"; and as certain festivals on which no work may be done are also called "assembly" (Atzereth), it follows that no work may be done on a fast-day also. We might assume then that, as on those other festivals no work may be done from the time of dusk on the preceding eve, such should also be the case with these fast-days. Said R. Zera: It was explained by R. Jeremiah bar Abba that as it is written, "Gather the elders," this might be compared to them;



and as the elders assemble only during the day, so work should *not* be done only during the day. If that be so, then let it be prohibited to work only from midday on; for the elders generally assemble about midday. Said R. Shesha the son of R. Idi: This bears out the opinion of R. Huna, who said that in olden times the assemblies of elders would take place from the morning on.

What would the elders do when they assembled in the morning? Said Abayi: From morn until midday they would occupy themselves with municipal affairs; and the first part of the afternoon would be consumed in the reading of the scrolls and of the Haphthorah, while the other part would be devoted to the recital of prayers, as it is written [Nehemiah, ix. 3]: "And they stood up in their standing-place, and read in the book of the law of the Lord their God the fourth part of the day; and another fourth part they made confession, and prostrated themselves before the Lord their God." Perhaps the contrary was the case; *i.e.*, they read the Law and prayed in the forenoon and occupied themselves with the municipal affairs in the afternoon? This would not be consistent; for it is written [Ezra, ix. 4]: "And then assembled themselves unto me every one that trembled at the words of the God of Israel, because of the trespass of the exiles: and I sat astounded until the evening sacrifice; [ibid. 5] And at the evening sacrifice I rose up from my fasting, and while rending my garment and my mantle, I knelt down upon my knees, and spread out my hands unto the Lord my God."

Raphram bar Papa said in the name of R. Hisda: "On days when one is fasting on account of a mournful occurrence, as the 9th of Abh, or when is mourning the loss of a near relative, bathing in either cold or warm water is prohibited; but where bathing is not allowed as a luxury, as on ordinary communal fast-days, warm water must not be used but cold water may be." Said R. Idi bar Abin: "This we have learned also in our Mishna, for it says 'that the bathing places are closed,' which signifies that bathing in warm water is prohibited." Said Abayi to him: "What proof is that? If then cold water was prohibited, would the Mishna say that all rivers and lakes should be drained or stopped up?" And R. Shesha the son of R. Idi replied: "My father meant to say that the following was the difficulty in the Mishna: It says that bathing is not allowed, why then should it add that the bathing places were closed? Therefore the Mishna evidently meant to imply that the bathing places were closed in

order to prevent the use of warm water, but cold water may be used."

Where should the fasting-prayer be mentioned? R. Jehudah led his son R. Itz'hak to the desk, and the latter proclaimed: "If an individual takes it upon himself to fast, he must recite the fasting-prayer and insert it among the eighteen benedictions, between the benediction of redemption and healing."

R. Itz'hak (of a later generation) opposed this: May, then, an individual say an additional benediction? Therefore, according to his opinion, he should say it in the prayer commencing: "Hear our voice, O Lord," etc. And so also said R. Shesheth. What is the final decision? Said R. Samuel bar Sassartai, and so also said R. Hyya bar Ashi in the name of Rabh: "It should be said between the benedictions of redemption and healing." R. Ashi, however, said in the name of R. Janai the son of Ishmael: "In the prayer commencing, 'Hear our voice,' " etc. And thus the Halakha prevails.

We have learned in one Boraitha that pregnant women and those suckling infants should fast only during the first fast-days ordained by the community, but not during the subsequent fast-days. In another Boraitha we have learned that they should fast in the last fast-days, but not in the first; and in a third Boraitha we have learned that they should fast neither in the first nor in the last. Said R. Ashi: Hold firm to the middle Boraitha and the others will be readily explained (*i.e.*, the first Boraitha means to say that they should fast on the three days between the first three days and the last seven, but not on the last seven days; the second Boraitha calls the three middle days the last because they were preceded by three others, hence it says that they should fast only on the last three days, *i.e.*, the three days mentioned above; and the last Boraitha means to say that they need not fast on the first three days or on the last seven, but only on the three middle—thus all three Boraithoth mean one and the same thing).

"*The alarm is sounded.*" Wherewith was the alarm sounded? Said R. Jehudah: "With the cornets." And R. Jehudah the son of R. Samuel bar Shilas, quoting Rabh, said: "With the shout, 'Answer us, O Lord!'" All agree that where cornets are used it is referred to as "sounding an alarm," but they differ concerning the prayer, "Answer us, O Lord!" One says that that is also called sounding the alarm, while the other says that it is not. He who says that the alarm was sounded by reciting the prayer mentioned, also admits that the cornets were used; but

the one who says that the cornets were blown, does not hold that the prayer was also said.

Did we not learn in a Boraitha that on account of other kinds of plagues, such as the itch, locusts, flies, wasps and gnats, and snakes the alarm, was not sounded, but the prayers were merely shouted; and as shouting signifies that the prayer, "Answer us," was merely said, it must be assumed that where it says that the alarm was sounded it means that the alarm was sounded with cornets? This constitutes a difference of opinion among Tanaim, as we learn in a subsequent Mishna (Chap. III. of this Tract), which says: "For the following calamities an alarm is to be sounded even on Sabbath," etc.; and as on the Sabbath it is not permitted to sound an alarm with cornets, we must assume that the prayer, "Answer us," etc., is also called an alarm. Such is the conclusion.

In the days of R. Jehudah the Third there was a calamity. He ordained thirteen fast-days, but no favorable answer was received. He accordingly desired to ordain more fast-days; but R. Ami said to him: "It was said that the community must not be troubled to too great an extent." Said R. Abba, the son of R. Hyya bar Abba: "R. Ami said that from a selfish motive (*i.e.*, he did not care to fast any more), for my father said in the name of R. Johanan that only when rain is withholden thirteen fast-days should be kept, and no more; but on account of other calamities the people should fast until their prayers are answered, and thus we have also learned in a Boraitha.

The inhabitants of Nineveh sent a query to Rabbi: "Should we, whose soil is unusually dry and in need of rain already in the month of Tamuz (June—July) be considered as a community and when praying for rain insert the prayer in the benediction of years, or should we be regarded as individuals and insert the prayer in that commencing, 'Hear us, O Lord!'" He answered them: "Ye are regarded as individuals and must insert the prayer for rain in that commencing, 'Hear us, O Lord.'"

An objection was raised from the following Boraitha: R. Jehudah said: "All this applied to the time when the Israelites were in their own land and Palestine was the principal place, but in the present time the prayers are said according to the place, time, and year?" And he answered him: Thou askest concerning a contradiction of Rabbi to a Boraitha? Rabbi is a Tana, and consequently may have his own opinion and differ with the teaching of a Boraitha. How does the Halakha prevail,

however? R. Na'hman said: "The prayer for rain must be inserted in the benediction of the years," and R. Shesheth said: "It must be inserted in 'hear our voice,'" etc. And the Halakha prevails according to R. Shesheth.

"*But on Thursday they may be taken off entirely,*" etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: On Monday towards evening, the shop-shutters were only partly closed; on the Thursday they were entirely opened in honor of the Sabbath; but if there were two doors to the shop, one of them could be opened even on Monday; and if there was a bench against the door, it was allowed to open the door on Monday as usual.

"*From the erection of buildings and from the planting of pleasure-gardens,*" etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: What is called a building of pleasure? A house which was built especially for a son about to be married; and what is meant by a pleasure-garden? A bower for princes.

"*And mutual greetings.*" The rabbis taught: The scholars would not greet each other at all; but the common people when greeting the scholars would be answered very feebly and with a faint nod. Amongst themselves the scholars would sit wrapped in their cloaks, silent and morose, the same as mourners and as men who were rebuked by the Omnipotent, until the Lord would have mercy upon them.

R. Elazar said: A prominent man must not clothe himself in sackcloth unless he knows positively that his prayers will be answered, as was the case with King Jehoram the son of Achab, concerning whom it is written [II Kings, vi. 30]: "And it came to pass when the king heard the words of the woman, that he rent his clothes, as he was passing along upon the wall; and the people looked, and behold he had sackcloth beneath upon his flesh," etc.

R. Elazar said again: "Not everyone has a right to rend his clothes, nor is it proper for everyone to fall upon his face (in prayer). Moses and Aaron fell upon their faces [Numbers, xiv. 5], and Joshua and Caleb rent their garments" [ibid., ibid.].

R. Zera, and according to others R. Samuel ben Na'hmeni, opposed this: "If it said, 'Joshua and Caleb rent their garments,' the statement of R. Elazar would be correct, but as it says '*And* Joshua and Caleb rent,' etc., it signifies that they did *both*—fell upon their faces and rent their garments."

R. Elazar said again: Not to everyone is it allowed to praise God by rising or by bowing. Kings may do so by rising, as it is

written [Isaiah, xlix. 7] : " Thus hath said the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him who is despised by men, to him who is abhorred by nations, to the servant of rulers, kings shall see it and rise up." Princes may do so by prostrating themselves, as it is written [ibid.] : " Princes, and they shall prostrate themselves."

R. Zera, others say R. Samuel ben Na'hmeni, opposed this : " If the verse read, 'and princes shall prostrate themselves,' it would imply that they would not rise *and* prostrate themselves; but as it reads 'princes, and they shall prostrate,' etc., it implies that they did both."

Said R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak : " I would also remark that not everyone is worthy of obtaining light, and not everyone is worthy to have joy. The righteous are deserving of light and the upright of joy, as it is written [Psalms, xcvi. 11] : 'Light is sown for the righteous, and joy for the upright in heart.'"



## CHAPTER II.

### REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE ORDER OF PROCEDURE ON THE LAST SEVEN FAST-DAYS, AND THE PRAYERS TO BE RECITED ON THOSE DAYS.

MISHNA: What is the order of procedure on the fast-days? The ark containing the Holy Scrolls is to be brought into an open place in the city, ashes of burnt substances are to be strewed on that ark, on the head of the Nassi (prince), on the head of the chief of the Beth Din (court of justice); and other persons shall also themselves strew ashes on their heads. The eldest among them shall then address them in heart-moving terms, as follows: "My brethren! Consider that it is not written, anent the (repentance of the) Ninevites, that God regarded their having wrapped themselves in sackcloth and considered their fast-days, but that 'God saw their *works*, that they had turned from their evil way' [Jonah, iii. 10], and the tradition of the prophets is (as it is written): 'Rend your hearts, and not your garments'" [Joel, ii. 13].

After standing up to pray, the people shall place at the praying-desk, to minister, an old experienced person who has children and whose larder is empty, so that his mind may be entirely devoted to his prayer. This person shall say twenty-four benedictions; namely, the eighteen benedictions of the daily prayer, with the addition of six more, which are as follows: The texts of Zikhronoth (remembrance of His creatures) and of Shophroth (sounding of the cornet); the chapters: [Psalms, cxx.] "Unto the Lord, when I was in distress, did I call, and he hath answered me"; [ibid. cxxi.] "I lift up my eyes unto the mountains," etc.; [ibid. cxxx.] "Out of the depths have I called to thee, O Lord; and [ibid. cii.] "A prayer of the afflicted, when he is overwhelmed." R. Jehudah said: It was not necessary to mention the Zikhronoth and Shophroth, but the following passages are to be read instead, namely: [I Kings, viii. 37] "If there be famine in the land, if there be pestilence," etc.; and [Jeremiah, xiv.] "The word of the Lord

that came to Jeremiah concerning the drought"; and the concluding is then added to each.

To the first he (the reader) shall say additionally: "May He who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah answer you, and listen to your (prayer and) cry on this day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, Redeemer of Israel!" To the second he shall say: "May He who answered our ancestors on the Red Sea answer you, and listen favorably unto your cry this day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who rememberest all things forgotten (by man)!" To the third he shall say: "May He who answered Joshua in Gilgal answer you, and listen to your cry this day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who deignest to listen to the sound of the cornet!" To the fourth he shall say: "May He who answered Samuel in Mizpah answer you, and listen this day to your cry. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hearkenest to (our) cry!" To the fifth he shall say: "May he who answered Elijah on Mount Carmel answer you, and listen favorably to your cry on this day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hearkenest to prayer!" To the sixth he shall say: "May He who answered Jonah in the bowels of the fish answer you, and listen unto your cry this day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who answerest in the time of distress!" To the seventh he says: "May he who answered David and his son Solomon in Jerusalem answer you, and listen unto your cry on this day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, who hast compassion on the earth!"

It happened in the days of R. Halaphta and R. Hanina the son of Teradion, that a minister advanced to the praying-desk and completed the entire benediction without any (of the congregation) answering thereto "Amen." (The sexton then proclaimed): "Sound, priests! Sound!" (The minister who said the prayers then continued): "May He who answered our father Abraham on Mount Moriah answer you, and listen favorably to your prayer this day." (The sexton then called): "Sound an alarm, sons of Aaron! Sound an alarm!" (The previous minister continued): "May He who answered our ancestors on the Red Sea answer you, and listen favorably to your cry this day." When the sages were informed of this, they said: "This was not our custom, except at the eastern door (of the Temple) and on the Temple mount."

On the first three fasts, the priests who had the weekly watch of the Temple fasted, but only part of the day, and the ministering priests did not fast at all. On the second three fast-days, the



priests on the weekly watch fasted the whole day, but the ministering priests only fasted part of the day; but on the last seven fast-days both classes of priests fasted the whole day. So said R. Jehoshua. But the sages say: "The first three fasts were not kept by either of the two classes; on the second three fasts the priests on weekly watch would fast part of the day, but the officiating priests would not fast at all. On the last seven, however, the priests on the weekly watch would fast the whole day; but the officiating priests would fast only part of the day."

The priests having the weekly watch may drink wine at night, but not during the day,\* but the officiating priests may drink it neither by day nor by night. The priests of the weekly watch and the standing men (commoners attending the public sacrifices as the representatives of the congregation at large) are not allowed to shave their beards or to wash their clothes; but on Thursday they are permitted to do so, in honor of the approaching Sabbath. (Moed Katan, p. 25.)

Wherever it is mentioned in the "Roll of Fasts" that "no lamentation and mourning is to be made" on certain days, it is also prohibited to do so on the day preceding, but permitted on the day following. R. Jose, however, says: "It is prohibited to do so on both the day preceding and the day following." Where it is said, however, "No fasts are to be kept thereon," it is allowed to fast on the day preceding and following days. R. Jose, however, says: "It is prohibited on the preceding, but allowed on the following day."

Public fasts must not be ordered to commence on a Thursday, in order not to raise the price of victuals in the markets;† but the first three fasts must be kept on Monday, Thursday, and the following Monday. But the second three fasts may follow on Thursday, Monday, and the following Thursday. R. Jose says: "Even as the first fasts are not to be commenced on Thursday, so also are the second and last fasts not to commence on that day."

\* This regulation is a general one and applies to ordinary days as well as to fast-days.

† Precautions were taken in every instance to prevent exorbitant prices being charged for victuals and at times even existing ordinances were abrogated for this purpose. Thus no fast-days were ordered to commence on Thursday in order that the dealers in articles of food might not take advantage of the greater demand produced by the necessity of laying in an extra supply for the day preceding the fast and for Sabbath.

Public fasts are not to be ordered to take place on the feast of the New Moon, on that of Dedication (Hanukah), nor on that of Lots (Purim); but if the fast had already been commenced on one of those feasts, it need not be broken. Such is the decree of Rabban Gamaliel. R. Meir, however, says, that although Rabban Gamaliel said that the fast need not be broken, he admits that on those days people are not to fast the entire day. Such is also the case with the fast of the ninth of Abh, if it happen to fall on a Friday.

GEMARA: "*What is the order of procedure on the fast-days?*" Does this apply also to the *first* three fast-days? Then it would be a contradiction to the following Boraitha: The first and the second three fast-days they enter into the praying-house and pray as usual; but in the last seven the ark is to be brought into an open place, etc. Said R. Papa: "Nay; our Mishna also refers to the last seven."

"*On the head of the Nassi (prince)*"; and further, the Mishna teaches that "other persons shall also strew ashes on their heads." This should not be so! For did not Rabbi teach in a Boraitha that where an act of honor is to be accomplished the most prominent persons are commenced with, while when an act of humiliation is to be performed the lowest in rank are first considered? The strewing of ashes on the heads of the prince and of the chief of the Beth Din first is also an act of honor; for they are told that they are more worthy of praying for mercy for us and for all the world.

"*Other persons shall also strew ashes on their heads.*" Why must the prince and the chief of the Beth Din have someone else to strew ashes on their heads? Can they not do so themselves? Said R. Abba (or Ada) of Kisri: "The humiliation of disgracing one's self by one's own hands is not equal to that of being disgraced by the hands of others (where prominent persons are concerned, but as for common people it does not matter)." On what part of the head are the ashes put? Said R. Itz'hak: "On the place where the phylacteries are generally worn, as it is written [Isaiah, lxi. 3]: 'To give unto them ornament in the place of ashes,' implying that where ornaments (phylacteries) were worn ashes were put."

Why do they congregate in an open place? Said R. Hyya bar Abba: "In order that they might say: 'We have prayed privately and were not answered, hence we shall humiliate ourselves by praying in public.'" And Resh Lakish said: "In

order that they might say: 'We have been driven from our abodes, and may our banishment be the means of our forgiveness.' " Why is the ark brought into an open place? Said R. Jehoshua ben Levi: "In order that they might say: 'We had a hidden treasure, but through our transgressions that also has become profaned.' " Why do they clothe themselves in sackcloth? Said R. Hyya bar Abba: "In order that they might say: 'We are now like the beasts of the field.' " Why are ashes strewn on the ark? Said R. Jehudah ben Pazi: "In order to say that this is an allusion to what is written [Psalms, xci. 15]: 'With him I am in distress,' meaning that the Shekhina shares the distress of the people." Resh Lakish said: "In order to say that this is an allusion to the passage: 'In their affliction he was afflicted.' " Said R. Zera: "When I saw the rabbis strew ashes on the ark, my whole body trembled."

Why are ashes strewn on the heads of all? Concerning this, R. Levi bar Hama and R. Hanina differ. One says that this is equal to saying: "We are now before thee, O Lord, as ashes"; and the other says: "It is for the purpose of begging the Lord to remember the ashes of Isaac." For what purpose did they go out to the cemeteries? \* Concerning this, R. Levi bar Hama and R. Hanina also differ. One says, in order that they might say they were now equal to the dead; while the other says that it was for the purpose of having the souls of the departed pray for them.

Why was the Mount called Mount Moriah [II Chronicles, iii. 1]? Concerning this there is again a difference between R. Levi bar Hama and R. Hanina. One says that Moriah is the equivalent of Horaah (*i.e.*, enactment), while the other says that Moriah is the equivalent of Mora (fear); for when the Temple was built, other nations were awed.

"*In heart-moving terms.*" The rabbis taught: If the eldest among them was also a scholar he would address them; otherwise a scholar, even if he was younger, would address them, and if there was no scholar among them a prominent man would do it. And he would say to them: "Brethren! It is not written, anent the repentance of the Ninevites, that God regarded their having wrapped themselves in sackcloth and considered their fast-days,

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\* In the Palestinian Talmud it is stated, in addition to what is taught in this Mishna, that they would clothe themselves in sackcloth, go out to the cemeteries, and sound the cornet.

but that 'God saw their works, that they had turned from their evil way ' " [Jonah, iii. 10].

Concerning the Ninevites it is written [Jonah, iii. 8]: "But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth." How was it done? They separated the suckling animals from their mothers and said: "Sovereign of the Universe! If Thou wilt not have mercy upon us, we will not have mercy upon them." And further on: "Let men call unto God with might." What is meant by "with might"? That means to say that they said: "Lord of the Universe! Who of the two should give way unto the other? The oppressed and the one who cannot be oppressed, the righteous and the wicked?" (Now, as we are the oppressed and Thou canst not be oppressed, shouldst Thou not overlook our iniquity?) Further, it is written [ibid.]: "And let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence which is in their hands." What is meant by "the violence which is in their hands"? Said Samuel: "If a man had wrongfully appropriated a beam which he had used in building a house, he would tear down the house and restore the beam to its rightful owner."

R. Ada bar Ahabha said: "If a man confesses to a wrong committed, and repents it without making proper restitution therefor, he is equal to a man holding a dead reptile in his hands and bathing himself in order to become clean; for, as a man who has a dead reptile in his hands, even should he bathe in all the legal baths in the world, would not become clean until he had rid himself of the reptile—but if he threw away that unclean thing a bath measuring forty Saahs would cleanse him—so it is with a man who had committed a wrong: unless he made proper restitution all confession and repentance is in vain, as it is written [Proverbs, xxviii. 13]: 'He that concealeth his transgressions will not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them will obtain mercy'; and as it is written [Lamentations, iii. 41]: 'Let us lift up our heart and our hands unto God in the heavens.'"

"*After standing up to pray.*" The rabbis taught: At prayer, though there be the eldest and a scholar present, neither should be placed at the reading-desk unless they were experienced in prayer; but only one who has had thorough experience. R. Jehudah said: "The minister should be a man who has children and cannot provide for them, who works hard in the field but has empty storehouses, who has good manners, who is modest, who is popular, who has an attractive, sweet voice, who can read the entire Holy Writ, and is competent to learn Midrash, Hala-



khoth, and Haggadoth, and is conversant with all the benedictions." The rabbis looked among themselves and cast their eyes upon R. Itz'hak bar Ami, who had all those qualities.

(R. Jehudah said :) "'Who has children and cannot provide for them and who has empty (store) houses.' Is that not one and the same thing?" Said R. Hisda: "By an empty house is meant one free from sin." What is meant by "good manners"? One who never had a bad reputation since his earliest youth.

"*With the addition of six more.*" Are there not seven additional benedictions? as the Mishna states further on: "To the seventh he says," etc. Said R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak: By the seventh is meant the seventh to the long benediction, as we have learned in a Boraitha: He says twenty-four benedictions, namely: the eighteen benedictions of the daily prayer, with the addition of six more, and those six are said between the benediction of redemption and healing, and the benediction of the redemption is made longer. After each benediction the congregation answers "Amen." Such was the custom, however, only outside of the Temple, but in the Temple the reader would say: "Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, from the beginning to the end of the world"; and they would conclude by saying: "Blessed be the Redeemer of Israel." But no "Amen" was answered; and why not? Because in the Temple it was not allowed to answer "Amen." Whence do we deduce this? Because it is written [Nehemiah, ix. 5]: "Arise, bless ye the Lord your God from eternity to eternity. And let men bless thy glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise." This signifies, that after each blessing the Lord's name should be praised (but not that "Amen" should be said).

The rabbis taught: To the first benedictions the reader would say: "Blessed be the Lord the God of Israel, from the beginning unto the end of the world. Blessed be the Redeemer of Israel!" and the people answered after him: "Praised be the name of the glory of His kingdom for ever and ever." The Chazan (sexton) of the congregation then says: "Sound, priests, sound!" The reader then continues: "May He who answered Abraham on Mount Moriah answer you, and listen to your cry on this day." The priests then sound, make an alarm, and sound again. To the second, the reader says at the conclusion: "Blessed be the Lord, who remembereth all things forgotten (by man)"; and the people answer: "Praised be the name of the glory of His kingdom for ever and ever." The Chazan then says: "Sound

an alarm, children of Aaron, sound an alarm!" The reader then says: "May He who answered our ancestors on the Red Sea answer you, and listen favorably unto your cry this day." The priests then make an alarm, sound, and then make another alarm; and such is the manner of procedure with everyone of the benedictions. The Chazan says alternately, "Sound!" and "Sound an alarm!" until all the benedictions are said.

Thus did R. Halaphta proceed in Sepphoris and R. Hanina ben Teradon in the city of Sikhni; and when the sages were informed of this, they said: "This was not customary except at the eastern door of the Temple, and at the Temple Mount."

"*R. Jehudah said: 'It was not necessary to mention the Zikhronoth,'*" etc. Said R. Ada of Jaffa: "The reason of R. Jehudah's dictum is, that the Zikhronoth and Shophroth are only mentioned on the New Year day, on the day of the jubilee, and during times of war."

"*To the sixth . . . to the seventh he shall say,*" etc. Let us see! Jonah lived after the time of David and Solomon, why is he mentioned first? Because he must conclude the benediction to the seventh with, "Blessed be thou, O Lord, who hast compassion on the earth," therefore he must mention Jonah first. We have learned in a Boraitha: It was said upon the authority of Symmachos that instead of the benediction, "who hast compassion on the earth," the benediction, "who makest humble those that are arrogant," is said.

"*On the first three fasts, the priests,*" etc. The rabbis taught: Why was it said that the priests on the weekly watch were allowed to drink wine at night and not during the day? Lest the officiating priests be overwhelmed with work and those on the weekly watch would be required to assist them. And why was it said that the officiating priests must not drink either during the day or at night? Because they were compelled to work day and night.

"*The priests of the weekly watch and the standing men,*" etc. What was the reason that they were not allowed to shave their beards? "In order that they may not enter upon their duties while they are ugly to look upon," said Rabba bar bar Hana in the name of R. Johanan.\*

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\* The proper time when kings, officials, and the common people may shave their beards will be explained and discussed in Tract Sanhedrin, and for that reason the discussion pertaining thereto is here omitted.



"Wherever it is mentioned in the 'Roll of Fasts,'" etc. The rabbis taught: It says in the "Roll of Fasts": These are the days on which fasting is not permitted, and on some of them it is not even allowed to mourn. From the first of Nissan on, until and including the eighth, on which days it was resolved that the strife carried on between the Pharisees and the Bathusees concerning the continual daily offering\* should be amicably concluded by adopting the decree of the Pharisees, it was enacted that no mourning or lamenting should be permitted; and from the eighth day of Nissan until after the Passover festival it was established when the feast of Pentecost should be celebrated,† and for that reason on those days no mourning or lamenting is allowed.

The Master said: "From the first day of Nissan," etc. Why does he say from the first? That is the day of the New Moon, and in itself a feast-day when one must not mourn—why does he not say from the second day of Nissan? Said Rabb: "He said 'from the first day of Nissan' so as to provide that even on the day preceding that, one must not mourn." But the first day of Nissan being a feast of the New Moon, it is self-understood that on the preceding day one must not mourn; for such is the law concerning all days preceding a feast-day! Nay; but the feast of the New Moon is a biblical feast-day, and no additional measure need be enacted to provide for its faithful observance; and mourning on a day preceding a feast-day is only prohibited as a precautionary measure, lest the mourning be continued on the feast-day itself. If the feast-day, however, is a biblical one, such a measure is not necessary and is only enacted for rabbinical feast-days.

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\* The strife carried on between the Pharisees and the Bathusees concerning the continual daily offering was as follows: The Bathusees maintained that because it is written [Numbers, xxviii. 4]: "The one sheep shalt *thou* prepare in the morning and the other sheep shalt *thou* prepare toward evening," it is permitted for an individual to bring the continual daily offering, while the Pharisees held that the offering must be brought by the congregation from communal funds, basing their claim upon the passage [ibid. 2]: "Shall *ye* observe," etc.

† The Pharisees and Bathusees also disputed about the date when the feast of Pentecost was to be celebrated, the latter claiming that as it is written [Lev. xxiii. 15]: "And ye shall count unto you, from the morrow after the Sabbath . . . seven complete weeks," the day of Pentecost must necessarily fall on the first day of the week; but the Pharisees, through R. Johanan ben Zakkai, maintained that the passage implies that counting must be commenced on the day following the first day of the festival, and therefore the feast of Pentecost would fall on the sixth day of the month of Sivan.

The Master said: "From the eighth day until after the festival," etc. Why does he say "until after the festival"? Why not until the festival? Surely one must not mourn on the festival itself! Said R. Papa: "In the same manner as Rabh said, that the first day of Nissan is mentioned in order to provide for the day preceding it as a day on which one must not mourn, so in this case it says 'until after the festival' in order to include the day following the festival among the days on which it is not allowed to mourn; and this will be in accordance with the dictum of R. Jose, who says in this Mishna 'that it is prohibited to mourn on both the day preceding and following.'"

It was taught: R. Hyya bar Assi said in the name of Rabh that the Halakha prevails according to R. Jose, and Samuel said that the Halakha prevails according to R. Meir.

R. Na'hman ordained a fast-day on the thirteenth day of Nissan, and he was reminded by the sages that that was the day of Torainos; but he replied that the day of Torainos was abolished, for on that day Shmaia and Ahia his brother were slain. Why was R. Na'hman reminded that the day was that of Torainos, he could have been apprised of the fact that it was the day before the feast of Nikanor? Said R. Ashi: "If the day was abolished as the feast-day of Torainos, should it be kept as a precautionary day for the observance of the day of Nikanor?"

What is Nikanor and what is Torainos? We have learned in a Boraitha: Nikanor was one of the Greek viceroys, and every day he would lift up his hand and vow that if ever Judea and Jerusalem came into his hands he would crush them. After the Maccabees conquered him in battle, his thumbs and big toes were cut off and hung up in the gates of Jerusalem, and it was said that the mouth which had vowed against Jerusalem and the hands which had been lifted up against it should be made to suffer.

What is Torainos? It was said: When Torainos desired to slay Lolainos and his brother Papos in Ludkia (Lydda), he said to them: "If ye be of the same nation as Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, let your God come and save you from my hands as He did them from the hands of Nebuchadnezzar." They answered: "Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah were truly righteous men and Nebuchadnezzar was a just king, deserving of being the means through which a miracle was to be performed. But we have incurred the death penalty before Heaven in any event, and if thou shouldst not slay us, God has other agents who will

accomplish this—for instance, lions, bears, and other wild beasts who could kill us; and thou art a wicked man, who art not worthy of having a miracle occur through thee, and God hath given us into thy hands in order to hold thee to account for our blood which thou wilt have shed.” Still, he had them executed, and it was said that he did not leave his place before two envoys arrived from Rome, and his skull was split into pieces.

“*Public fasts are not to be ordered*,” etc. What is meant by “but if the fast had already been commenced”? Said R. Aha: “If three fast-days had already been kept”; and R. Assi said: “Even if one had been kept.”

R. Jehudah said in the name of Rabh: All (of) this (clause of the Mishna) is in accordance with the dictum of R. Meir in the name of Rabban Gamaliel; but the sages said that one must complete his fast. Mar Zutra went and preached in the name of R. Huna, that the Halakha prevails that one must fast under those circumstances and, moreover, complete the fast.

### CHAPTER III.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING OCCURRENCES ON ACCOUNT OF WHICH  
FAST-DAYS ARE ORDERED, OR ALARMS ARE SOUNDED. WHEN  
FASTING ON ACCOUNT OF RAIN IS STOPPED.

MISHNA: The order of procedure on fast-days, as mentioned (in the preceding Mishna) above, applies only when the first fructifying rains do not descend; but when the sprouts commence to degenerate, they shall immediately commence to sound an alarm. It should also be immediately sounded if there be an interval of forty days between each rain; for that is a general plague on the land, causing dearth.

If sufficient rain for the growth of sprouts and herbs had fallen, but not for the growth of trees; or sufficient for the growth of trees, but not enough for the growth of herbs; or sufficient for both, but not enough to fill the wells, cisterns, and caves (creeks), an alarm is immediately to be sounded.

Thus, also, if no rain should have fallen over some particular city, similar to that which is written [Amos, iv. 7]: "I caused it to rain upon one city, and upon another city I caused it not to rain; one piece of land was rained upon," etc.—the inhabitants of such a city must fast and sound an alarm, and those of the circumjacent places shall fast, but not sound. R. Aqiba, however, says, "They are to sound, but not to fast."

Thus, also, when pestilence is raging in a city, or when the walls fall down, the inhabitants of such a city must fast, and those of the adjacent places should fast, but not sound. R. Aqiba, however, says: "They should sound the alarm, but not fast." What is considered a pestilence? If in a city capable of furnishing five hundred able-bodied men three persons die in three consecutive days, it is a pestilence; less than this is not a pestilence.

An alarm should be sounded in all places for the following plagues: For a corn-blast, mildew, locusts, crickets, attacks of wild beasts, and hosts of armed men; for all these an alarm should be sounded, because they are spreading evils.

It once happened that some elders going from Jerusalem, each to his own place, decreed a fast, because a corn-blast, the grainless stalks of which were sufficient to heat an oven, had been seen near Ascalon.

They also decreed a fast on account of two children having been devoured by wolves on the other side of Jordan. R. Jose says: "It was not ordered because of the wolves having devoured the children, but because of their presence (in the towns prowling for food)."

On account of the following calamities an alarm should be sounded even on the Sabbath: For a city surrounded by enemies, for a flood threatening to inundate the country, and for a ship in imminent danger of being wrecked at sea. R. Jose says: "This sounding is intended to obtain assistance from men, and not as an imploring cry to God." Simeon the Temanite says: "They shall also sound on the Sabbath in case of pestilence"; but the sages did not coincide with him.

On account of every plague—with which may the community never be visited!—an alarm should be sounded except on account of an excess of rain.

It once happened that Honi Hama'gel (the circle-drawer) was asked by the people to pray for them, that rain might descend. Said he to them: "Go and bring in the Passover ovens,\* that they may not be spoiled by the rain." He prayed, but the rain did not descend. What did he then? He drew (marked out) a circle around him, and placing himself within it, prayed as follows: "Creator of the Universe! Thy children have always looked up to me as being like a son of Thy house before Thee. I swear, therefore, by Thy Great Name, that I will not move from this place until Thou wilt have compassion on Thy children." Whereupon the rain commenced to drop down gently. Said he: "It was not for this I prayed, but for rain sufficient to fill the wells, cisterns, and caves." The rain then fell in torrents, and he said: "Not for such rain have I prayed, but for mild, felicitous, and liberal showers." The rain then descended in the usual manner, until the Israelites of Jerusalem were obliged to seek refuge from the city to the Temple Mount, on account of the rain. They came and said to Honi: "Even as thou didst pray that the rain might descend, so pray now that it may cease."

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\* The ovens were movable, and were used to roast the paschal lamb on the Passover. When not in use they were kept outside of the house.



And he replied: "Go and see whether the stone To'yim \* is covered by the waters." Simeon b. Sheta'h sent him word, saying: "If thou wert not Honi, I would order that thou be anathematized. But what shall I do with thee, since thou art petulant towards God, and yet He forgiveth and indulgeth thee like a petted child who is petulant towards his father and is nevertheless forgiven and indulged? To thee may be applied the passage [Prov. xxiii. 25]: 'Let thy father and thy mother rejoice, and let her that hath born thee be glad.'"

If, while the people are fasting, rain should fall before sunrise, they shall not continue to fast the whole day; but they must do so if the rain fall after sunrise. R. Eliezer says: "If it rains before noon, they need not continue to fast the whole day; but they must do so if the rain commenced after noon is passed." It once happened that a fast was ordered in Lydda and it rained before noon, whereupon R. Tarphon said unto the people: "Go, eat and drink, and make a feast." They went, ate and drank, and made a feast; but in the evening they returned and sang the great Hallel.

GEMARA: "*When the first fructifying rains do not descend.*" A contradiction was made: "We have learned in a Boraitha: 'If the first and second fructifying rains did not descend, prayers for rain must be commenced, and only if the third fructifying rain was withheld fasting is resorted to'?" Said R. Juhudah: "The Mishna means to say this: If the time for the first, second, and third fructification had passed without rain having descended, then the order of fasting goes into effect; but if the first fructification has taken place, yet the seed had not sprouted, or the sprouts had degenerated, then the alarm must be sounded." Said R. Na'hman: "Only if the sprouts had degenerated the alarm is sounded, but not if they had withered (for in the latter event there is still hope that they might revive). Is this not self-evident? It says, distinctly, 'if the sprouts had degenerated'?" R. Na'hman means to say that, even if the sprouts had already reached the stage of stalks and had then withered, it might be assumed that there was no hope of their ever again reviving—hence we are told that all hope is not yet lost.

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\* This was the name of a high stone in Jerusalem, where the finders of lost articles would deposit what they had found, and then proclaim that they had found something. The owners would then come, and upon sufficient identification of the lost article it would be restored to them.

"*For that is a general plague on the land, causing dearth.*" What is considered a "plague causing dearth"? Said R. Jehudah: "That is a plague which eventually results in a famine." Said R. Na'hman: "If a town had no grain, but could procure a supply from another town by means of ships, it cannot be said to be suffering from an actual famine, but merely from temporary want; but if the entire land has no grain and it can procure a supply only from another country, and not by means of ships but by means of asses, then a state of famine can be said to exist."

R. Hanina said: "Even if the price of grain has reached the sum of one Sela for one Saah, but at that price it is obtainable, this would merely constitute a case of want; if, however, the price of grain remained one Sela for *four* Saah, but it was not obtainable at all, then a state of famine actually exists." Said R. Johanan: "All this applies when grain is dear but money is plentiful; if, however, grain is not dear but money is scarce, an alarm must immediately be sounded; for I recollect it happened at one time in Tiberias that although four Saah of grain were to be had for one Sela, still many people were starving to death, because they did not have the necessary coin with which to purchase their grain."

"*If sufficient rain for the growth of sprouts . . . had fallen,*" etc. It may well be that sufficient rain can descend for the growth of sprouts that would not be beneficial to the growth of trees—for instance, a heavy rain; or that the rain be sufficient for trees but inadequate for the growth of sprouts—for instance, a light rain (see page 5). It might also be that sufficient rain should descend for both the trees and the sprouts, which would, however, be inadequate to fill the wells, cisterns, and caves; but how can that take place, after what we have learned in a Boraitha, namely: "that sufficient rain descended to fill the wells, cisterns, and caves, which was, however, inadequate for the trees and sprouts"? That (Boraitha) refers to a rain which fell in torrents and filled up the wells, etc., but did no good to the trees and sprouts.

The rabbis taught: In the midst of Passover, if sufficient rain had not yet fallen for the trees, the alarm is already to be sounded; and if there was not sufficient rain by the time the middle (day) of the Feast of Tabernacles was reached, the alarm must immediately be sounded; and at all times where there is not sufficient drinking-water on hand, the alarm should at once be sounded. What is meant by "at once"? The Monday,

Thursday, and Monday following; and the sounding must be effected in the capital of the province concerned.

On account of croup (quinsy or whooping-cough), if fatalities arise therefrom, the alarm must be sounded; but if all affected become cured an alarm is not necessary. On account of locusts (Gobai),\* as soon as they make their appearance the alarm is to be sounded. R. Simeon ben Elazar said: "Also on account of grasshoppers" (Chagabim).†

The rabbis taught: An alarm may be sounded on account of the trees (when they have not succeeded) in ordinary years; but when there is a want of rain for the wells, cisterns, and caves, this may be done even in the Sabbatical years. R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, however, said: "It may so be done in Sabbatical years even on account of the trees, as they constitute the means of livelihood of the poor." The same we have learned in another Boraitha, with the addition that even on account of the . . . it may be done, as they are the means of livelihood of the poor.

The rabbis taught: It once happened that the Israelites came to Jerusalem for the festivals, and there was not sufficient water for drinking purposes. So Nakdimon ben Gurion went to a certain master (a heathen), and requested him to lend him twelve wells of water for the pilgrims, promising to return either the twelve wells of water or in lieu thereof twelve talents of silver, at a certain time. When the time arrived, the master sent to Nakdimon in the morning demanding either the wells of water or the silver, and Nakdimon replied: "I have still the whole day's time." At noon the same demand was made, and the same answer given. Late in the afternoon the master sent the same demand, and received a reply that the day had not yet passed. So the master laughed at the idea, saying that if a whole year had elapsed without it having rained, was it possible that it should still rain on that day? and went to his bath rejoicing over the prospect of soon possessing the money due him. At the same time that he entered his bathroom, Nakdimon went into the Temple, wrapped himself in his cloak, and commenced to pray, saying: "Creator of the Universe! It is known to Thee, that not for the sake of glory for me nor for my father's house, but

\* In Tract Chullin, 65 *a*, it says Go-bai zeh Arbah = Gobai, and means locust.

† Chagab is also a locust, and presumably a grasshopper. See Numbers, xiii. 33; Isaiah, xl. 22, etc.

for the glory of Thy name, that the pilgrims in Jerusalem might have water, did I borrow those wells." Immediately upon this the sky became clouded, rain began to fall, and the twelve wells became filled up to overflowing.

When the master stepped out of his bath-house, Nakdimon went out of the Temple, and they met. Said Nakdimon to him: "Refund to me the amount for the water in excess of that which I borrowed from thee." And he replied: "I know well that the Holy One, blessed be He, caused the world to storm only on thy account, yet I can still claim the amount due me, for the sun has already set and the rain descended after the stated time had expired." Nakdimon then reëntered the Temple, again wrapped himself in his cloak and commenced to pray, saying: "Creator of the Universe! Announce to the world that Thou hast favorites here on earth!" Whereupon the clouds immediately scattered, and the sun again commenced to shine. The master seeing Nakdimon, said to him: "Had the sun not reappeared, I should have had a valid claim for the amount of money due me." We have learned in a Boraitha: His name was not Nakdimon, but Boni, and he was called Nakdimon because on his account the sun hastened.\*

The rabbis taught: "For the sake of each of three men alone the sun shone, and they are Moses, Joshua, and Nakdimon ben Gurion." This is correct in the case of Nakdimon ben Gurion, from the above-mentioned tradition. In the case of Joshua it is also correct, because so is it written [Joshua, x. 13]: "And the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens." But whence do they adduce that the sun shone for Moses alone? Said R. Elazar: This may be inferred from the analogous term: "I will commence." It is written [Deut. ii. 25]: "This day will I commence to put the dread of thee," and [Joshua, iii. 7]: "This day will I commence to make thee great," etc. R. Johanan said: "(No analogous comparison is necessary, for) it may be adduced from the passage itself [Deut. ii. 25]: 'Whoever will hear of thee shall tremble and shall quake because of thee.' Why will they do this? Because on Moses' account alone the sun shone."

The rabbis taught: A man should always be soft (*i.e.*, pliable, yielding) as a reed, and not hard as a cedar-tree. It once

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\* Hastening is called in Hebrew "K'dimah," and Nakdimon is derived from K'dimah, according to the annotations of Joel Sirkosh.



happened that R. Elazar ben R. Simeon (should rather be R. Simon ben Elazar) went from the tower of Gador, where resided his Master, riding on an ass. He rode leisurely on the banks of the river, being greatly rejoiced and feeling very proud on account of the wealth of knowledge he had accumulated from his Master. On the way he met a man who was terribly ugly (of face).<sup>\*</sup> That man greeted R. Elazar respectfully, and said to him: "Peace be with thee, Rabbi!" The rabbi did not, however, return the greeting, and, moreover, said: "Vain man, how terribly ugly art thou! Are all thy townsmen as ugly as thou art?" And the man replied: "That I know not; but it would be seemly if thou wert to go to the Creator who formed me and say to Him: 'How ungainly is the creature Thou hast made!'" Realizing that he had offended against the man, R. Elazar dismounted and, making an obeisance, said: "I have sinned against thee—forgive me, I pray!" But the man refused, saying: "Nay, I shall not forgive thee until thou shalt go to the Creator and say to Him: 'How ungainly is the creature Thou hast made!'" R. Elazar, however, would not leave the man, and followed him on foot until they reached the city where R. Elazar dwelt. As soon as the townsmen perceived him they thronged towards him with greetings. "Peace be with thee, Rabbi, Rabbi! Master, Master!" The ugly man who preceded R. Elazar asked them whom they were addressing with "Rabbi" and "Master," and they answered: "The man who is following thee." Said he: "If he be a rabbi, may there not be many like him in Israel." And they asked: "Why not?" So he replied that thus and so had he been served by him. They then pleaded with him: "Still forgive him, for he is a great man in the study of the Law." And he said: "For your sakes I will forgive him, but upon the condition that he shall not do likewise again." Immediately following this, R. Elazar went forth and preached: "A man should be soft as a reed and not hard as a cedar."

On account of having been compared with man, it was destined for a reed that the Scrolls, Phylacteries, and Mezuzoth should be written with it.

*"When walls fall down."* The rabbis taught: "By 'walls' are meant sound walls; *i.e.*, such as were not expected to fall,

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<sup>\*</sup> In Tract Derech Eretz, as well as in the commentaries of Rashi and Tosphath, this man is said to have been Elijah the Prophet, who assumed that disguise in order to humble R. Elazar.



but not such as were tottering." What is meant by "such as are tottering"? Walls that stand on the banks of a stream. As it once happened in Neherdai there was a wall resting on a weak foundation; and although it had been standing for thirteen years, Rabh and Samuel would never pass by beneath it. One day R. Ada bar Ahabha came to Neherdai, and together with Rabh and Samuel set out to go somewhere. Said Samuel to Rabh: "Let the Master go with me in a roundabout way, so as to avoid the wall." But Rabh replied: "To-day this is not necessary. For R. Ada is with us, and his merits are such that a wall would not fall where he is about to walk; hence I have no fear."

R. Huna had wine in a room which was in an unsafe condition, and the walls of which were momentarily expected to fall. He wished to remove the wine, but was afraid to enter the room. So he got R. Ada bar Ahabha to enter the room with him, engaged him in a discussion concerning a Halakha, and while they were arguing R. Huna's men removed the wine. After they left, the walls of the room fell in. When R. Ada realized how he had been used, he became angry.

(What R. Ada did to be so eminently favored will be related in Tract Megilla.)

Rabha asked Raphram bar Papa: "Canst thou not relate to me the good things which R. Huna did?" And he replied: "I do not remember anything of his youth; but when he was of mature age, I know that whenever there was a storm in the city where he lived, which caused any damage to the buildings, he would have himself carried about in a golden palanquin and examine the city, and wherever he noticed an unsafe wall, would order its demolition. Wherever the owner of that building could not afford to have it rebuilt, R. Huna would have it done at his own expense. On every eve of Sabbath he would send his servants to the markets with instructions to purchase all the vegetables, which the marketers had left on their hands, and throw them into the stream, in order that they might not be put on sale again the following week in an unwholesome condition." [Why did he not rather distribute them among the poor than throw them into the stream? Because the poor would depend upon receiving them free the second time, and would not buy any at all. Then why did he not use them as food for the animals? Because R. Huna held that articles which a man can use as food should not be purchased as fodder for cattle to com-

mence with.] "Whenever the sickness of Shaibatha\* occurred in his city, he would examine it and give the sufferers relief; outside of his house he placed a jar of water for the use of all who desired him to relieve them. When sitting down to a meal, he would order a servant to throw open the doors and call out: 'Whoever desires to eat, let him come in and do so.'"

Said Rabha: "I could accomplish all that R. Huna did, with the exception of throwing open my doors and inviting everybody to eat; for there are a great many poor people in Mehuzza, and I could not feed them all." (According to another version, he said that he could not do this on account of the many soldiers and Persians stationed in Mehuzza, who would take advantage of such an invitation and eat him out of house and home.)

Ilpha and R. Johanan studied the Law together. They were in very poor circumstances and were in want of food. So they said: "We will lay aside our studies and engage in some remunerative occupation, thereby carrying out what is written [Deut. xv. 4]: 'Indeed, there should be no needy man among thee.'"

In the meantime they sat down to eat beneath an unsafe wall. So two angels appeared, and R. Johanan heard one of them say to the other: "Let us throw this wall down upon them, for they are about to leave the pursuit of the future life in order to obtain a worldly livelihood." But the other angel replied: "Let them be; for there is one of them whom the time will succor and who will shortly become great." R. Johanan heard this, but Ilpha did not, and the former asked: "Did Master hear anything?" And Ilpha replied: "Nay; I heard nothing." So R. Johanan thought: "Because I heard it and Ilpha did not, in all probability I am the one who is referred to as shortly to become great." And he said to Ilpha: "I have reconsidered it and will return to the study of the Law, thus fulfilling what is written in another passage [ibid. 11]: 'For the needy will not cease out of the land.'" Thus R. Johanan returned to his studies and Ilpha engaged in business. By the time Ilpha returned, R. Johanan became the chief of the college. The schoolmen after-

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\* Concerning the sickness of Shaibatha there is a lengthy discussion among the commentators of the Talmud. Some say that it was a muscular disease peculiar to children between the age of two months and seven years. Others say that it was a disease produced by evil spirits, etc. No definite term for the word can be found. The Aruch devotes two whole pages to the different opinions regarding this disease.

wards said to Ilpha: If thou hadst stayed here with us, we would have made thee the chief of the college.\*

It was said of Nahum the man of Gim-Zu—who was blind in both eyes, crippled in both hands, both of whose legs were crushed and whose whole body was covered with sores, and who was lying on a bed the feet of which stood in buckets of water so as to prevent worms from reaching his body, and his bed stood in a house which was in a tottering condition—that his disciples at one time wished to remove his bed from that house and then remove all the other vessels contained therein. So he said to them: "My children! First take out everything contained in this house and then remove my bed; for ye can rest assured that as long as I am in this house it will not fall." They did so, and after removing his bed the house fell in. Said the disciples to him: "As we can perceive, Master, thou art a truly upright man. Why, then, art thou so terribly afflicted?" And he replied: "My children! I myself am the cause of it. I was at one time on my way to the house of my father-in-law and had with me three asses, one laden with food, another with drink, and the third with delicacies. In the course of my journey a poor man came to me and said: 'Master, give me some food,' and I answered: 'Wait until I can unload my asses.' But before I had done so, the poor man expired. So I fell on his face and said: 'My eyes, which had no compassion on thy eyes, may they become blind! My hands, which had no mercy upon thy hands, may they become crippled! My feet, which had not pity with thy feet, may they be crushed!' And I could not assuage my grief until I had said: 'May my whole body become covered with sores.'" Said the disciples to him: "Woe is unto us that we must see thee in this condition." And he replied: "Woe would be unto me if ye did not see me in this condition."

Why was he called Nahum the man of Gim-Zu?† Because whenever something happened to him he would say: "Gam Zu Le-Toboh" (This also is for good).

It once happened that the Israelites had to send a present to the imperial house, and Nahum was selected to carry out the mission, because it was quite usual for miracles to be performed

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\* Here follow the questions put to and answered by Ilpha, which are, however, not essential in this tract, and which will appear in Tract Kethuboth.

† According to Zach. Frankel, in his work about the generations of the Tanaim and Amoraim, and also according to Dr. I. M. Wise, Dr. H. Strack, and Mielziner, Nahum was a resident of Gimzo, a town in southwestern Judea.

on his account. They intrusted to him a casket containing precious stones and pearls. When he arrived at his quarters for the night, thieves became aware of his treasure, and they removed the valuables contained in the casket, substituting therefor dry earth. When he arrived at the imperial palace, the casket was opened, and it being observed that it contained nothing but earth, the emperor became very wroth and determined to destroy all the Jews, thinking that they had merely mocked him. Nahum, however, said to himself: "Even this will lead to good." When a conference was held as to the manner in which the Jews were to be destroyed, Elijah appeared disguised as one of the councillors, and after the conference said: "Perhaps this earth is of the greatest value, as it may be the same earth which Abraham their father had within his domain, and which possessed the merit of turning into swords which would cut down the enemy when thrown at a hostile army. The coarser pieces would turn into arrows when thrown at the enemy, as it is written [Isaiah, xli. 2]: 'He rendered as earth his sword, as driven stubble his bow.'" \*

His advice was taken, and they said: "There is one land which we cannot conquer, let us try this earth and test its powers." This was done, and the land was conquered. The earth was thereupon deposited in the treasury, and the casket filled with precious stones and pearls. Nahum (who had been kept a prisoner in the meantime) was sent away with an escort and laden with great honors. On the return, it happened that Nahum and his escort had to pass the night in the same quarters where the precious stones had previously been stolen. When it was observed with what honors Nahum returned, he was asked what gifts he had brought the emperor, to be thus honored. He replied: "I brought the same casket there that I took away with me from this place." The men then, thinking that their earth was so valuable, tore down their houses, gathered up the earth, and sent it to the emperor, saying: "The earth which Nahum brought thee was our earth and not that of the Jews, for we took out the precious stones contained in his casket when he spent the night here and substituted this earth." The earth was examined and found to be unlike the other, so the senders were all put to death.

*"What is considered a pestilence? If in a city capable of fur-*

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\* This is a literal and not a figurative translation of that verse.



*nishing five hundred able-bodied men,"* etc. The rabbis taught: A town that can furnish fifteen hundred able-bodied men—as, *e.g.*, the village of Ako—and nine deaths occurred in three days, *i.e.*, three deaths each on three consecutive days, is said to be afflicted with pestilence. If, however, all the nine died in one day or in four days, it is not considered a pestilence. A town that has not more than five hundred able-bodied persons—*e.g.*, the village of Amigo—and three deaths occurred in three days, *i.e.*, one on each consecutive day, can be said to be afflicted with a pestilence. If, however, all three died in one day or in four days, no pestilence can be said to exist (for it is considered as only an accident).

In the town of Darogath, which had five hundred able-bodied persons, three deaths occurred in one day, and R. Na'hman the son of R. Hisda ordered a fast-day. Said R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak to him: "Thou art presumably of the opinion of R. Meir, who regards a bull as vicious if he had gored three men in one day (as explained in Tract Baba Kamma)."

R. Na'hman bar Hisda requested R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak to remove to his (the former's) city (so that they could study together). Said the latter: We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Jose said: Not the place where he lives makes the man distinguished, but the man makes the place distinguished. And so we find with respect to Mount Sinai, that so long as the Shekhina rested there, cattle were not allowed to graze even near the mountain, as it is written [Exod. xxxiv. 3]: "Neither let flocks or herds feed near the mount," and after the Shekhina had withdrawn from the mount, it is written [Exod. xix. 13]: "They may come up to the mount." A similar instance can be found with respect to the Tabernacle, near which the leprous could not come (as well be explained in Tract Menachoth).

Said R. Na'hman bar Hisda to him: "If this be so, then will I go to the place where thou, Master, dwellest." And he answered: "Nay, that would not be right; for thou art a rabbi and a son of a rabbi, while I am the son of one who was not among the scholars; therefore it would be more fitting that I should come to thee."

It happened that pestilence raged in Sura, but in the neighborhood where Rabh resided the pestilence was not prevalent. The townsmen concluded that this was due to the especial merits of Rabh; but in a dream they were told that this would be but a small object wherewith to demonstrate Rabh's merits, and that



this was so in consideration of the merits of a man who lends his hoe and other digging-tools used for burials, without compensation.

In Darogath there was a great conflagration, but in the neighborhood where R. Huna lived the fire did not reach, and it was thought that it was on account of the merits of R. Huna that it was spared; but they were also told in a dream that this would be but a small recognition of R. Huna's merits, and that it was merely in consideration of a certain woman who would heat her oven and then place it at the disposal of such as desired to bake their bread, without remuneration.

R. Jehudah was apprised of the fact that locusts had made their appearance, and he ordered a fast-day. Subsequently he was told that the locusts were not doing any damage, and he replied: "Did the locusts then bring their food with them?"

R. Jehudah was also advised that a pest had broken out among the swine, and he ordered a fast-day. Does then R. Jehudah hold that if a pest break out among one kind of animals it affects all others? Nay; but with swine it is different, for the entrails of a swine are similar to those of a human being (and the pest may prove contagious).

Samuel was told that a pest had broken out in Huzai, so he ordered a fast-day. He was reminded, however, that the place was a great distance off, and he replied: "Is there then a partition between here and there that would prevent the entrance of the pest in this place?"

R. Na'hman was told that a pest had broken out in Palestine, so he ordered a fast-day, saying: "If the princess is stricken, surely the slaves are affected." Is it only when a princess is stricken that a slave is affected? What about slave and slave? Did not Samuel order a fast-day in Neherdai when Huzai was stricken? From Huzai to Neherdai there was a regular caravan traffic, and Samuel apprehended lest one of the caravans should carry the pest from Huzai into Neherdai.

Abba the (expert) bleeder received greetings every day from the heavenly college; Abayi received such a greeting only once every eve of Sabbath; and Rabha would receive such a greeting only once every eve of the Day of Atonement. Abayi was grieved because of the greater distinction conferred upon Abba, and he was told: "The things that Abba does, thou canst not do." [What did Abba do that was so inimitable? First of all, he had a separate place for bleeding men and a separate place for

women. Then he had a certain garment for women with which he would clothe them, and which was split so that he could insert the lancet at any place without looking at the woman. Then he had a certain place where his fee for bleeding was deposited, and which was so arranged that as soon as it was touched a ring was heard; but he never looked at the amount deposited, and those that had not the necessary amount would merely touch the place and depart. If a young scholar came to him to be bled, he would not alone refuse to accept money, but would give him money, saying: "Take this and become well, for after bleeding a good meal should be eaten."]

One day Abayi sent two of his disciples to Abba to examine into his actions. Abba entertained them with meat and drink, and even made for them couches of fine wool to use as beds. On the morrow the disciples folded up their woollen couches and carried them into the market in order to sell them. They there encountered Abba. Said they to him: "Let Master estimate the worth of these." And he said: "So much." And they rejoined: "Perhaps they are worth more." And he answered: "For so much money I can purchase them." Said they to him: "These couches are thine; we took them from thee." And they continued: "What didst thou suspect us of?" And he replied: "I thought that perhaps some prisoners had to be ransomed, and ye did not wish to tell me what amount that would require last night. So ye took the couches, and probably thought to tell me this day." They then said: "Then take them back; they are thine." But he answered: "Nay; I have already made up my mind to devote them to charitable purposes, and hence I cannot take them back."

Rabha was grieved over the greater distinction conferred upon Abayi, who was greeted on the eve of every Sabbath, while he only received the heavenly greeting on the eve of every Day of Atonement; so he was told that it was sufficient for him that the entire town where he lived profited by his merits.

To R. Beroka of Huzaah, Elijah would frequently appear, when he (R. Beroka) would be standing in the market of Be-Lept. One day he asked Elijah whether there was any one in the market who would have a share in the world to come, and Elijah answered: "Nay." Suddenly Elijah perceived a man wearing black shoes, and the garments of that man had no show-threads. So he pointed him out to R. Beroka, and said: "That man will have a share in the world to come." R. Beroka ran up

to the man and asked him his occupation, and the man answered: "I have not time to-day. Come on the morrow." On the morrow R. Beroka again approached him and asked to know his occupation. The man replied: "I am a warden of a prison; I keep the men and women prisoners in separate compartments, and my own bed stands between the two compartments. There I sleep alone, and take care that no evil acts are perpetrated. If there is a daughter of Israel upon whom evil eyes have been cast (by the higher officials), I do my utmost, even at a personal sacrifice, to save her. One day it happened that a betrothed girl, upon whom the higher officials had cast an eye, was brought to my prison; so I took lees of wine, spread them over her couch, and said to the officials that she was suffering from her menstruation and could not be approached."

R. Beroka then asked the warden why he wore black shoes and garments without show-threads, and he replied: "In order that I should not be recognized as a Jew; for thus, if I hear of any plots that are formed against the welfare of my co-religionists, I can immediately advise the rabbis that they may pray to God to avert the impending calamity. And yesterday, when thou didst approach me, I told thee to come on the morrow, because I had heard a discussion pertaining to action to be taken against the Jews and I hastened to learn the true facts of the case."

Again it happened that two brothers were passing by, and Elijah said to R. Beroka: "These two brothers shall also have a share in the world to come." R. Beroka approached them and asked to know their occupations, and they replied: "Our occupation is to cheer and comfort all those who are downcast, and when we see two men quarrelling, to make peace between them."

"*An alarm should be sounded in all places for the following plagues,*" etc. The rabbis taught: For a corn-blast, mildew, locusts, crickets, and attacks of wild beasts an alarm must be sounded wherever they make their appearance. And R. Aqiba said: "For the first two, as soon as they make their appearance ever so slightly in any place, an alarm must be sounded; but for locusts, as soon as the wing of one single locust is perceived in Palestine, an alarm must be immediately sounded."

"*Attacks of wild beasts.*" The rabbis taught: "For attacks of wild beasts an alarm should be sounded only if it is obvious that the attacks are in the nature of a curse, but otherwise no alarm need be sounded. How can the distinction be made? If the wild beasts are seen in a city, then it is to be considered in

the nature of a curse; but if they are seen in the field, it is nothing unusual. If seen in the day it is a curse, at night it is not. If the wild beast saw and pursued two men together, then it is a curse; but if it slunk away and sought to hide, it is not. If the wild beast killed two men and only devoured one, it is to be considered a curse; but if it devoured both (then it was simply hungry, and) it is not considered a curse. If the beast climbed up on a roof and snatched a child from the cradle, it is most assuredly a curse."

"*Hosts of armed men.*" The rabbis taught: Even if hosts of armed men are seen, who have no intention of attacking the place, but merely desire to pass through to make war upon others, an alarm must nevertheless be sounded; for there can be no more friendly intentions in a host of armed men than in that which was sent by Necho, King of Egypt, to Josiah, King of Judah, and still Josiah lost his life on their account, as it is written [II Chron. xxxv. 21]: "But he (Necho, King of Egypt) sent ambassadors to him (Josiah), saying: What have I to do with thee, thou King of Judah? I come not against thee this day, but against the house wherewith I have war, and God hath commanded me to make haste: forbear thee from meddling with God who is with me, that He may not destroy thee." What is meant by "God who is with me"? What God could Necho have had with him? Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: "It was an idol, and for the reason that Necho had confidence in the idol, Josiah thought that he could surely vanquish him in battle."

Further it says [ibid. 23]: "And the archers shot at King Josiah; and the king said to his servants: Carry me away; for I am sorely wounded." What is meant by "sorely wounded"? Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: "From that it may be inferred that his whole body was perforated by the arrows like a sieve." Before Josiah died, Jeremiah the prophet noticed that his lips were moving, and thinking that, God forbid, he was saying something blasphemous on account of the terrible pain he was suffering, Jeremiah stooped down and heard Josiah justifying the judgment which had befallen him, saying the passage [Lament. i. 18]: "Righteous is the Lord; for against his orders have I rebelled." Whereupon Jeremiah lamented his death with the words [ibid. iv. 20]: "The breath of our nostrils, the anointed of our Lord, was caught in their pits."

"*Should be sounded even on Sabbath.*" The rabbis taught:



On account of a city surrounded by foes, a ship that was wrecked at sea, or even on account of an individual pursued by foes, robbers, or evil spirits, a man may keep a fast-day himself (without waiting for the order instituting it). R. Jose, however, said: "A man is not allowed to do this by himself, lest he become weak through fasting and unable to work, when he would become dependent upon others who might have no pity for him, because he himself was the one responsible for his condition." Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: "What reason has R. Jose for this assertion? Because it is written [Genesis, ii. 7]: 'And the man became a living being,' which implies, that man should let the living soul, given him by the Creator, live and not wilfully kill it."

"*Simeon the Temanite says,*" etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: For a pest an alarm should be sounded on a Sabbath, and so much the more on a week-day; but R. Hanan bar Pitom, the disciple of R. Aqiba, said in the name of his Master that for a pest no alarm need be sounded even on a week-day.

"*On account of every plague,*" etc. The rabbis taught: On account of every plague—with which may the community never be visited—an alarm should be sounded, except on account of an excess of rain. What is the reason? Said R. Johanan: "Because it is not permitted to pray for the cessation of too much good." Said Rami bar R. Jod: "In the land of exile (Babylon) an alarm should be sounded for an excess of rain." We have also learned in a Boraitha that in a year when there is an excess of rain the priests of the weekly watch would send word to the standing men: "Take care of your brethren in exile, that their houses may not become their graves."

The rabbis taught: It is written [Lev. xxvi. 4]: "Then will I give you rains in their due season," which means, that the earth shall not become too full of water nor that it shall be thirsty, but have just sufficient; for if there is too much rain, the earth becomes too sodden and fruit cannot grow. Another explanation of the term "in their due season" is, that the rains will fall on the night of the fourth day of the week and on the night of Sabbath, when men do not go out; for so do we find, that in the days of Simeon ben Sheta'h rain fell only on those nights, and grain prospered so that wheat-grains became as testicles, barley-corns as the kernels of olives, and lentils as golden Dinars; and part of these fruits of the earth were preserved to show to future generations, in order to demonstrate to them that the only reason



why crops were not as prosperous as they formerly were was because of the transgressions of the people, as it is written [Jeremiah, v. 25]: "Your iniquities have turned away these things, and your sins have withholden what is good from you."

So it was also at the time when Herod built the new Temple. It would rain only at night, and in the morning the wind would disperse the clouds, the sun would commence to shine, and the people would go to their work in peace, so that all men knew that they were engaged in a heavenly undertaking.

*"It once happened that Honi Hama'gel,"* etc. The rabbis taught: It once happened the greater part of the month of Adar had passed, and no rain had yet fallen. Honi Hama'gel was thereupon requested to pray for rain. He prayed, but no rain descended. So he marked out a circle around him, the same as Habakkuk did, as it is written [Habakkuk, ii. 1]: "Upon my watch will I stand, and place myself upon the tower," placed himself in the midst of it, and said: "Creator of the universe! Thy children have always looked up towards me as being like a son of Thy house before Thee. I swear therefore, by Thy great Name, that I shall not move from this place until Thou shalt have compassion upon Thy children." Whereupon the rain commenced to drop down gently. Said the disciples to him: "May it be that we may see thee and not die; for we think that the rain is merely dropping in order to release thee from thy vow." And he replied: "It was not for this I prayed, but for rain sufficient to fill the wells, cisterns, and caves." The rain then fell in torrents, each drop being as large as the mouth of a barrel, and the sages opined that each drop contained no less than a lug of water. The disciples again said to him: "Rabbi, may we see thee and not die! We believe that the rain is falling in order to destroy the world." He again said: "Not for such rains have I prayed; but for mild, felicitous, and liberal showers." The rain then descended in the usual manner, until the Israelites of Jerusalem were obliged to seek refuge from the city to the Temple mount on account of the rain. They then came to him and said: "Rabbi, even as thou didst pray that the rain might descend, thus pray now that it may cease." And he replied: "I have a tradition that it is not permitted to pray for a cessation of too much good. Still, bring me a praise-offering." It was accordingly brought to him, and putting both hands upon it, he said: "Creator of the universe! Thy people which Thou hast brought out of Egypt cannot be sustained either with too much evil or too

much good. When Thou becamest angry with them, they could no longer bear it; and now that Thou hast showered too much good (rain) upon them, they cannot bear it either. Let it be Thy will that the rains may cease and the world become happy." Thereupon a wind came up, dispersed the clouds, the sun commenced to shine, and the people went out into the fields and brought back mushrooms.

Simeon ben Sheta'h then sent him word, saying: If thou wert not Honi, I would order that thou be anathematized; for were these years as those when Elijah said that no rain should fall and when he had the key to the rain, thou wouldst have merely desecrated the Holy Name; but what shall I do with thee, since thou art petulant towards God, and yet He forgiveth and indulgeth thee like a petted child who is petulant towards its father, and says: "Father, bathe me in hot water, bathe me in cold water, give me nuts, almonds, apricots, and pomegranates," and is nevertheless forgiven and indulged? To thee may be applied the passage [Prov. xxiii. 25]: "Let thy father and thy mother rejoice, and let her that hath born thee be glad."

The rabbis taught: What was the word which the Sanhedrin sitting in the chamber of marble sent to Honi Hama'gel after the occurrence? They cited the passage [Job, xxii. 28]: "And if thou decree a thing, it will be fulfilled unto thee; and upon thy ways the light will shine," and said: "Thou hast decreed below, and the Holy One, blessed be He, ratified it above, and the generation which was in darkness thou hast enlightened with thy prayer."

R. Johanan said: All the days of this righteous man (Honi), he troubled himself concerning the meaning of the passage [Psalms, cxxvi. 1]: "When the Lord bringeth back again the captivity of Zion, then shall we be like dreamers." Honi would constantly say: "How can a man sleep or be like a dreamer for seventy years?" Once he was travelling on the road, and he noticed a man planting a carob-tree. He asked him how many years it would take before the tree would bear fruit, and the man answered: "Seventy years." Honi then asked: "Art thou, then, sure that thou wilt live seventy years?" And the man replied: "I found carob-trees in existence when I came into the world, consequently my ancestors must have planted them. Why should I not also plant them for my children?" About that time Honi became hungry, and sat down to eat near the newly

planted tree. After the meal he fell asleep, and a bay \* formed about him so that he could not be noticed, and thus he slept for seventy years. When he awoke, he observed a man gathering the fruit from the carob-tree; and he asked the man: "Didst thou plant this tree?" The man replied: "Nay; I am the grandson of the man that planted it." Honi then realized that he must have slept for seventy years, and when he looked around for his ass, he noticed that there were many smaller asses. He then went to his home, and inquired whether the son of Honi Hama'gel was still alive. He was told that the son was no longer living, but that a son of the son was alive. He then said: "I am Honi Hama'gel"; but they would not believe him. He went to the house of learning and heard them say: "To-day the Halakhoth are as clear as in the days of Honi Hama'gel, who would immediately render a clear decision when any questions whatever were put to him by the rabbis." He went in and said to them: "I am that Honi"; but they would not believe him, nor would they accord him due respect. This caused him to become downcast and despondent, and he prayed to God that he might die, and so he died. Said Rabha: "This illustrates the saying: 'Give me the glory due me, or give me death.'"

Abba Helkyah was a grandson of Honi Hama'gel. When the country was in need of rain the rabbis would send to him, and he would pray for rain, which thereupon commenced to fall. One day the country was in need of rain, and the rabbis sent a committee of two younger rabbis to him, with the request that he pray for rain. They came to his house, but did not find him. They went to his field, and found him weeding it. They greeted him, but he made no reply. On his way back to his home, he placed some wood and the hoe on one shoulder and a garment on the other shoulder. The entire way he did not wear shoes, but whenever he came to water which he had to ford he would put them on. When he came to a thorny path, he would raise his garments. When he came to the city, his wife met him dressed in fine apparel. When he reached his house, his wife entered first, then he, and finally the two young rabbis entered. He sat down to his meal, but extended no invitation to the rabbis to join him. When dealing out bread to his children, he gave the elder one loaf and the younger two. Afterwards he

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\* The Hebrew term is "Meshunitha." Rashi explains it to mean a rock, while the dictionaries define it as given in our text.

said to his wife in a low voice: "I know that these rabbis came on account of rain. Come, let us go up into the attic and pray for rain, and should the Lord have mercy on His children and cause it to rain, it will not appear as if it came about through us." They went up into the attic, and he stood in one corner, while she stood in another. The rain-cloud appeared in the direction where the wife was standing.

When he went down again, he said to the rabbis: "What hath brought the rabbis here?" And they replied: "The rabbis have sent us to Master that he may pray for rain." And he answered: "Blessed be the Lord, that ye no longer need Abba Helkyah's favor." Said they to him: "We well know that this rain is come only on account of Master, still we should like to know the reason for several actions on his part which appear to us surprising. Why, when we greeted the Master, did he not turn his face towards us?" He replied: "I hired myself out for the day and my time was not my own, hence I did not wish to waste any." "Why did the Master carry the wood on one shoulder and the garment on the other?" "Because the garment was borrowed by me to wear, but not to use as a pad for wood." "Why did the Master go barefooted all the way, and put on his shoes when coming to water?" "Because the entire way I could see what I was stepping on, but in water I could not." "Why did the Master raise his dress when walking in a thorny path?" "Because if my flesh should receive a scratch, it will heal; but if the garment should become torn it cannot be mended." "Why, when the Master came to the city, did his wife come forth to meet him, dressed in her best apparel?" "In order that I may not look at any other woman." "Why did she enter first, then the Master, and then we?" "Because I know nothing about you." "Why, when the Master sat down to eat, did he not invite us to partake also?" "Because there was not sufficient bread for all, and I did not wish to invite you merely to receive your thanks in vain." "Why did the Master give the elder child one loaf and the younger two?" "Because the elder was at home all day and probably helped himself previously, but the younger was at school all day and more hungry." "Why did the rain-cloud appear first in thy wife's corner?" "Because my wife is always at home, and when a poor man begs for a meal she always gives it to him readily, while I can but give him a Zuz and he must first go and purchase food for it. Thus her charity is more effective than mine."



Hanan the Hidden was a son of the daughter of Honi Hama'gel. When the country was in need of rain, the rabbis would send the school-children to him, who would surround him, take hold of his garments, and cry: "Father, father, give us rain!" And he would say to the Holy One, blessed be He: "Creator of the universe! Cause rain to descend, for the sake of those who cannot distinguish between a father capable of giving rain and one who is not." Why was he called Hanan the Hidden? Because whenever he would do some good, he would hide himself so as not to be observed.

Said R. Z'reiqa to R. Saphra: "Come and see the difference between the pious of Babylon and the righteous of Palestine. The pious of Babylon—*e.g.*, R. Huna and R. Hisda—when the country was in need of rain, would say: "Let us combine and pray to God, perhaps we shall find favor in His eyes, and He will give us rain"; and the righteous of Palestine—*e.g.*, R. Jonah the father of R. Mani—when the country was needing rain, would go to his house, ask for a sack, and say: "I will go to the market and buy a Zuz' worth of grain." When going out he would seek a deep place, as it is written [Psalms, cxxx. 1]: "Out of the depths have I called to thee, O Lord," and he would station himself in a hidden place, cover himself with the sack, and offer up a prayer for rain to the Lord, and forthwith rain would descend. When returning home, he would be asked: "Didst thou buy the grain for a Zuz?" And he would reply: "I noticed that it commenced to rain, and hence thought it unnecessary to go to the market for it, as it can be had now anywhere."

Again it happened that R. Mani the son of Jonah was sorely troubled by the members of the house of the Nassi (prince); so he went and threw himself on his father's grave, exclaiming: "Father, father, the men of the house of the Nassi are troubling me." One day the retainers of the Nassi were riding by the burial ground where Jonah was interred, and their horses could not proceed until they vowed not to trouble R. Mani any more.

R. Mani would frequently come to the house of R. Itz'hak ben Aliashib, and he once told R. Itz'hak that the members of his father-in-law's family were giving him much trouble. Said R. Itz'hak: "May they become poor!" and they really did become poor. R. Mani then came again, and complained that now his relatives were poor they were compelling him to support them. Said R. Itz'hak: "May they then become rich again!" and accordingly they became rich.



At another time R. Mani complained to R. Itz'hak that his wife was too ill-favored. Said R. Itz'hak: "What is her name?" And R. Mani replied: "Hannah." Said R. Itz'hak: "May Hannah become handsome!" and accordingly she became handsome. Subsequently R. Mani came again, and complained that now his wife had become handsome she made life a burden to him by her vanity, and R. Itz'hak said: "May Hannah again become ugly!" and Hannah again became ugly.

Some time later, two disciples of R. Itz'hak ben Aliashib begged him to pray to the Lord for them, that they might become wiser and more capable for study. Said he to them: "I used to do that at one time and would succeed; but I have stopped that practice and shall not do it again."

Elazar the man of Birtha would be shunned by the men who were sent out to collect money for charitable purposes, because he would give away everything he had. One day he went out into the market to buy the articles necessary for the proper celebration of his daughter's marriage. The collectors of alms perceived him, and hid themselves. He, however, pursued and overtook them, and said: "I adjure you, tell me for what purpose ye are sent out now and what ye need." And they answered: "We are collecting money for two orphans who are about to be married." Said he: "I vow they have precedence over my daughter." And he gave them everything he had, with the exception of one Zuz, for which he bought some wheat and deposited it in his storehouse. The mother (Elazar's wife) said to the daughter: "What did your father bring?" And the daughter replied: "All that he brought he deposited in the storehouse." She then went to the storehouse, but could not open the door, as the wheat was piled up so high and the storehouse was so full that the wheat forced its way through the cracks in the walls. Thereupon she betook herself to the house of learning, where Elazar her husband was studying, and calling him out, said: "Come and see what thy friend did for thee." Arriving at the storehouse, Elazar said: "I vow that all this wheat is devoted to the poor, and thou hast but a share in it equal to the other poor."

R. Jehudah Hanassi (the Second) once ordered a fast-day and prayed for rain, but without success. Said he: "What a difference there is between Samuel the prophet and Jehudah the son of Gamaliel! Woe is to the generation that has retrograded to such an extent and woe to the Nassi (prince) who hath witnessed

it." He became very despondent, and forthwith rain began to fall.

A fast-day was ordered from the house of the Nassi, and no previous notice thereof was given to R. Johanan and Resh Lakish. Said R. Johanan to Resh Lakish: "What shall we do? We did not take it upon ourselves to fast to-day or yesterday?" Replied Resh Lakish: "We are dependent upon the Nassi; hence it is not necessary for us to take it upon ourselves a day in advance."

Again it happened that the house of the Nassi ordered a fast-day; but no rain descended. So Oshiya, the youngest of the colleagues, taught: It is written [Numb. xv. 24]: "Then shall it be, if through inadvertence of the congregation it was committed by ignorance," which is a simile to a bride in the house of her father—if she have beautiful eyes, there is no need of examining her body, but if her eyes be bad her entire body should be examined (*i.e.*, if the prince of the congregation be a righteous man, the congregation need not be tried, but if he be wicked the congregation itself must be examined). So the servants of the Nassi came to Oshiya, threw a cloth over his neck, and tortured him. Said the townsfolk to the servants: "Let him be, for though he often offends us with his sayings, still, as we see that he means well and does so for our good, we let him have his own way."

Rabbi once ordered a fast-day, but no rain descended. So Ilpha, others say R. Ilphi, went up to the reading-desk to pray. As soon as he came to the sentence, "He causeth the wind to blow," a wind sprang up; and when he said, "He causeth the rain to descend," rain began to fall. So Rabbi asked Ilpha: "What are thy merits?" And he answered: "I live in a very small town, where it is almost impossible to obtain any wine for the Kiddush and the Habdalah on the Sabbath; but I go to great trouble to procure it and distribute among my townsmen, and when reciting the Kiddush prayer I also include my townsmen in the prayer."

Rabh came to a certain place and ordered a fast-day, but no rain descended. The minister of the congregation went up to the reading-desk and commenced to pray. Arriving at the sentence, "He causeth the wind to blow," a wind sprang up; and as soon as he said, "He causeth the rain to descend," rain began to fall. Said Rabh to him: "What are thy merits?" And he answered: "I teach little children, and treat the children of the

poor like the children of the rich. Those that cannot afford to pay, I teach without remuneration; and being also a fisherman, I persuade those who do not wish to come and learn, to do so by giving them fish to take home with them."

R. Na'hman ordered a communal fast. He prayed for rain, which, however, did not come. And he said to the people: "Take ye Na'hman and throw him from the roof to the ground." He became downcast, and rain commenced to fall. Rabba ordered a fast, he prayed, and no rain came. And they said to him: "But when R. Jehudah orders a fast, then rain comes." He replied: "What can I do? In point of learning we are better than they; for in the years of R. Jehudah all their studies were confined to the Section of Damages, while we study now all the six sections. And when R. Jehudah came to the Section of Taharath (Purification), Tract Uqtsin, and the Halakha, 'When a woman put herbs in a pot,' or, according to others, to the Halakha, 'If olives were soaked with their leaves, they are clean,'\* R. Jehudah used to say: 'I find it as deep as would befit the times of Rabh and Samuel.' But we have thirteen colleges which are studying the Tract Uqtsin, and nevertheless when R. Jehudah would put off one shoe, the rain would come; and we are crying the whole day, and there is nobody to look at us. And if one might say, R. Jehudah was better than we by his deeds, then if there is any one here that knows we have not acted rightly, let him say so; but the true reason is, what can the leaders of the generation do, when the generation itself is not good?"

R. Jehudah saw once two men throwing bread at each other, and he said: "I see from this that there is plenty in the world." He cast an evil eye, and a famine began. Said the rabbis to R. Kahna the son of R. Nahuniah: "We have heard that the Master frequents the house of R. Jehudah: cause him to go into the market (he should become aware that a famine reigns)." He did so, and took him out into the market. He saw a crowd of men. He asked: "What is the matter?" He was answered: "There is a measure of dates for sale, and each is eager to obtain it." Said he: "I perceive from this that there is famine in the world." He said to his servant: "Take off my shoes." He had taken off but one of his shoes, when it began to rain.

R. Mari the son of the daughter of Samuel said: "At that time, when R. Jehudah had his shoes taken off, I stood on the

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\* This will be explained in its place in Tract Uqtsin.

bank of the River Papa. I saw angels clad like sailors, who took sand, filled the ships therewith, and it was turned to fine flour, and the whole world came to buy it. I said to the persons of my household: 'Do not buy of it, for it is only through a miracle, and I wish to derive no benefit from miracles.' I waited till the morrow, when ships laden with wheat actually arrived from Parzina."

It happened once that Rabha came to the city of Hagrunia, and he ordered a fast, but no rain came. Said he to the people: "Fast over night." On the morrow morning he said to them: "If any one saw something in a dream, he should come to tell what he saw in the dream." R. Elazar of the same city related that he had been told in a dream the following words: "Good peace to the good master who received his knowledge from a good master, and who with his goodness is doing good to his people." Said Rabha: "I infer from this that it is a favorable time." He prayed again, and rain came.

It happened once that a man had committed a crime for which he had to receive stripes in a court where Rabha was the chief judge. Rabha had the penalty inflicted on him. He could not endure it, and died. When the government of Sabbor the king heard of this, they wanted to cause trouble to Rabha. Said Iphra Harmyz, the king Sabbor's mother, to her son: "I advise you to have nothing to do with the Jews, for all that they request of their God, He grants to them." Said he: "What, for example?" Said she: "Whenever they pray to God for rain, it rains." Said he to them: "That is only because they pray in the season when it has to rain. Now, when it is Tamuz [July], when it ought not to rain, let them pray for rain, and you shall see that it will not come." So she sent for Rabha, and said to him: "Fix your mind on it, and pray to God to send rain." He prayed, and no rain came. Said he: "Before the Lord of the universe [Ps. xlv. 2] God, with our ears have we heard, our fathers have told us . . . in times of old, but *we* with our eyes do *not* see it." Then it rained so much that all the canals of Me'huza overflowed and the water spread in the streets into the River Tigris. His father appeared to him in a dream and told him: "Is there any other man who gives so many pains to Heaven? Go and change the place of your couch." On the morrow he found marks of a knife with which his bed had been slashed.

R. Papa also ordered a fast: no rain came. Meanwhile he



felt too weak from fasting. He took a spoonful of *daitha* [a kind of dish], and went on praying. Still, however, no rain came. R. Na'hman, his fellow-lodger in the inn,\* said to him: "If the Master would partake of another spoon of *daitha*, then rain would surely come" (ironically). He felt shame, he became downcast, and rain came. (See Yomah, p. 76: "R. Hanina b. Dosa," etc.)

Said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh: "Every day a heavenly Voice goes forth and says: 'The whole world is nourished merely by the merits of Hanina my son, and for Hanina alone one Kabh of carobs is sufficient from one Sabbath-eve to the other.'"

The wife of Hanina would make a fire in her oven on the eve of every Sabbath in order not to be ashamed before her neighbors. She had, however, one bad neighbor who said: "I know that Hanina and his wife have nothing to cook for the Sabbath, why does she make fire in her oven? I shall go and see." She went and knocked at the threshold, and Hanina's wife became ashamed and went into another room. In the meantime a miracle happened, and the oven became filled with bread. The neighbor, noticing the bread in the oven, called to Hanina's wife: "Bring the bread-shovel, or the bread will be burned!" And she replied: "I just went in for that purpose." We have learned in a Boraitha: Hanina's wife really did go into the next room for a shovel, because she was accustomed to have miracles happen to her.

One day the wife of R. Hanina said to him: "How long shall we yet be troubled with the want of our daily bread?" And he replied: "What can I do?" Said she: "Pray to God that He should give thee something." He accordingly went and prayed. A hand came forth and gave him a leg of a golden table. Subsequently his wife saw in a dream that all the righteous in heaven ate on golden tables having three legs, while her table only had two. Said she to Hanina: "Wouldst thou then like it, that all should eat at a table having three legs, while we should eat at one only having two? Pray to God that the golden leg may be taken back." He prayed, and the leg was taken back. We have learned in a Boraitha that this latter miracle was even greater than the former; for we have a tradition, that it is usual for heaven to bestow but not to take back.

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\* According to the Aruch the text should read, "Bar-Ushpirti," i.e., the son of Ushpirti, who was the mother of R. Papa, and he said to him thus: "You, son of Ushpirti," etc.



One eve of Sabbath Hanina noticed his daughter in a despondent mood. Upon asking her what the trouble was, she replied: "I got the two vessels containing oil and vinegar mixed, and poured the latter into the Sabbath lamp and lit it." Said he: "My daughter! why should that trouble thee? He who hath ordained that oil should burn can also ordain that vinegar should burn." We have learned in a Boraitha that the vinegar in that lamp burned all night and all day, till some of it was used for the Habdalah prayer.

R. Hanina ben Dosa had a few goats, and he was told that his goats caused damage to others. Said he: "If my goats do damage, may wolves devour them; but if they do not, may they each bring a bear impaled upon their horns." That same evening, each goat really brought in a bear mounted on its horns.

How did Hanina happen to have goats? Was he not a poor man? Said R. Pinchas: "It once happened that a man left a few chickens at the house of Hanina, and the latter said to his wife: 'Do not use the eggs, for the chickens do not belong to us.'" Accordingly the eggs were left untouched, and in the course of time quite a number of chickens were produced, so that they became too troublesome, and Hanina sold them and with the proceeds purchased goats. Subsequently the man who left the chickens returned to claim them. He was asked for a description of his property, which he gave correctly, whereupon Hanina turned over the goats to him, and these are the goats that brought bears upon their horns.\*

The same Hanina had a neighbor who was building a house, and the beams were too short. So she came to him, and said: "I have built my house, but my beams do not reach far enough." And he asked her her name. And she answered: "Aikho." He then said: "Aikho, may thy beams become longer." We have learned in a Boraitha that they really became so long that they protruded an ell on each side, while others say that pieces were conjoined with the beams so that they attained the required length. We have learned in another Boraitha: "Plimo said: 'I saw that house and noticed that the beams protruded an ell on each side. And I was told that the house was the one for which Hanina prayed to have the beams become longer.'"

R. Hama bar Hanina ordered a fast-day, but no rain de-

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\* According to Hananel and other commentaries the whole paragraph was inserted here from other sources than the Gemara. In the *Ain Jacob* this is not to be found.

scended, and he was told: "Why, R. Jehoshua ben Levi would order a fast-day, and rain would commence to fall!" Said he: "That was the son of Levi, and not I!" And they said: "We meant to say, that we should again congregate, and perhaps, if we prove contrite of heart, the rain will descend." They did so, and still no rain descended. Said he to them: "Think ye that ye deserve rain to descend for you?" And they answered: "Yea." Said he to the sky: "Cover thy countenance." No results, however, were produced, and he exclaimed: "How impudent are the skies!" Whereupon they became covered, and rain commenced to fall.

Levi ordered a fast-day, but no rain descended. Said he: "Creator of the universe! Thou didst ascend to the heavens, and didst sit down, but hast no compassion upon thy children." Whereupon rain descended, but Levi fell and became lame.

R. Hyya bar Lolaini heard one cloud say to another: "Come, let us go and deposit our waters in the lands of Ammon and Moab." Said R. Hyya: "Creator of the universe! when thou gavest Thy Law to Israel, Thou hadst gone to other nations, offering it to them, and they would not accept it; and now Thou wouldst allow the clouds to pour forth their waters on their lands!" and turning to the clouds, he exclaimed: "Pour forth your waters on this spot," and they did so.

The same R. Hyya preached: "It is written [Psalms, xcii. 13]: 'The righteous shall spring up like the palm-tree; like a cedar in Lebanon shall he grow high.' Why are both the palm-tree and the cedar mentioned? If the palm-tree only were mentioned, I would say that as a branch of the palm-tree which is broken off does not grow out again, so it will be with the righteous—if he dies, he will leave no one in his stead; therefore a cedar is also mentioned, for with a cedar it is not so. And if a cedar only were mentioned, I might say that as the cedar does not bear fruit, so will it also be with the righteous (which may God forbid). Hence the palm-tree is also mentioned."

The rabbis taught: It once happened that R. Eliezer ordered thirteen fast-days, but no rain descended. When the congregation dispersed after the thirteenth fast-day, he asked them if they had already ordered their graves, and they commenced to weep aloud, whereupon rain commenced to fall.

Another time it happened that R. Eliezer recited the twenty-four benedictions at prayer, but he was not answered. R. Aqiba followed him at the reading-desk, and said: "Father and

King! we have no other king but Thee. Only for Thy sake have mercy upon us!" And his prayer was answered. The people then began to murmur (and say that R. Aqiba was a greater man than R. Eliezer). A heavenly Voice went forth and said: "Not because R. Aqiba is a greater man than R. Eliezer was his prayer answered, but because he always gives in to another, while R. Eliezer never did that."

The rabbis taught: How much rain should fall in order that the congregation may stop fasting? When the rain fills up a furrow made with a plough. So said R. Meir, but the sages say: If the water is a span deep on dry land, two spans on moist earth, and three spans on ploughed soil.

*"If while the people are fasting rain should fall before sunrise."* The rabbis taught: "If while the people are fasting rain should fall before sunrise they may stop fasting, but if after sunrise they must not. Such is the dictum of R. Meir. But R. Jehudah said: If it fell before noon they may stop fasting, but if after noon they should not. R. Jose, however, said: They may stop if rain fell before the end of the ninth hour (3 P. M.), but not if it fell after that hour. And so we find in the case of Achab, King of Israel, who fasted from the ninth hour on, and further, as it is written [I Kings, xxii. 29]: "Hast thou seen how Achab hath humbled himself before me?" (It is explained elsewhere that kings used to eat their meal at the ninth hour.)

R. Jehudah Nesseah (the Second) ordered a fast-day, and rain commenced to fall after sunrise. He thereupon desired to stop fasting, but R. Ami said to him: "We have learned that if rain falls before noon or after noon there is a difference of opinion, but after sunrise all agree that fasting may be stopped."

Samuel the Little ordered a fast-day, and rain descended before sunrise. The people wanted to infer therefrom that it was in praise of the congregation; for as soon as a fast was ordered, rain commenced to fall. Said Samuel to them: "This can be compared to a case of where a slave begs for something of his master, and the master says: 'Give it to him! I do not care even to hear his voice.'"

Again it happened that the same Samuel ordered a fast-day, and rain fell after sunset. Then said the people: "Surely this is in praise of the congregation that after fasting and praying rain came." Said he to them again: "Nay, this is not to be considered; for it can be compared to a slave begging of his master, who says: 'Let him pray and trouble himself for some time be-

fore I will give it to him.' " What, then, does Samuel consider as praise for the congregation? If when the sentence is read, " He causeth the wind to blow," a wind springs up, and when the sentence, " He causeth the rain to descend," is read, rain commences to fall.

*"In the evening they returned and sang the great Hallel."* Why should they return in the evening and say the Hallel? Let them say it beforehand? Abayi and Rabha both say: " Hallel is not sung except with a satisfied soul and a well-filled stomach." This is not so! For did it not happen that R. Papa ordered a fast-day in the synagogue of Abi Gober, and rain descended before noon, when they sang the Hallel, and then ate and drank? With the inhabitants of Me'huza it is different, for they are generally drunkards.

## CHAPTER IV.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE PRIESTS' BLESSING OF THE PEOPLE,  
THE INSTITUTION OF THE STANDING MEN—THEIR FASTS AND  
PRAYERS. THE FAST OF THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF TAMUZ  
AND THE NINTH OF ABH, AND THE CELEBRATION OF THE FIF-  
TEENTH DAY OF ABH.

MISHNA: At three periods of the year the priests shall raise their hands (to bless the people) at each prayer, (*i.e.*) four times on each day; viz., during the morning, additional, afternoon, and closing prayer. (The three periods mentioned are:) On the fast-days, on the fast of the standing men, and on the Day of Atonement.

(The reason for the institution of) these standing men is because it is written [Numb. xxviii. 2]: "Command the children of Israel, and say unto them: My offering, my bread for my sacrifices . . . shall ye observe," etc. How can an offering be brought for a person without his being present (at the time when it is sacrificed)? Therefore did the elder prophets institute twenty-four watches (divisions): each watch always had a section of standing men, composed of priests, Levites, and Israelites, stationed at Jerusalem. When the turn of each watch came around to go up (from their cities to the Temple), the priests and Levites went up to Jerusalem, and the Israelites who belonged to that watch assembled in (the synagogues of) their cities to read the history of the creation (*i.e.*, the first chapter of Genesis).

The standing men used to fast four times in the week; viz., from Monday until Thursday (inclusive), but they did not fast on Friday, on account of the honor due the Sabbath, nor on Sunday, that they might not (too suddenly) pass over from rest and pleasure to weariness and fasting—for that might endanger their lives. On Sunday the standing men read (the sections commencing): "In the beginning," etc. [Genesis, i. 1 to 5], and, "Let there be an expansion," etc. [*ibid.* 6, etc.]; on Monday they read: "Let there be an expansion," and, "Let the waters," etc. [*ibid.* 9, etc.]; on Tuesday: "Let the waters," and, "Let there be



lights," etc. [ibid. 14, etc.]; on Wednesday: "Let there be lights," and, "Let the waters bring forth," etc. [ibid. 20, etc.]; on Thursday: "Let the waters bring forth," and, "Let the earth bring forth," etc. [ibid. 24, etc.]; on Friday: "Let the earth bring forth," and, "Thus were finished," etc. [ibid. ii. 1 to 4]. The long section of the day was read by two persons and the short by one; this was done, however, during the morning and additional prayers; but at the afternoon prayers they entered (the Synagogue) and recited the sections mentioned by heart, even as the *Shema* is recited. On Friday afternoon they did not go to the synagogue at all, in honor of the Sabbath.

On the days on which the *Hallel* was sung, the standing men would not attend during the morning prayer (in Jerusalem). When there was an additional offering, they did not assemble at the time of the closing prayer. When a wood-offering was brought, they did not assemble during the afternoon prayer. Such is the dictum of R. Aqiba; but Ben Azai said to him: "R. Jehoshua taught as follows: 'When there was an additional offering, the standing men did not assemble during the afternoon prayer; and when a wood-offering was brought, they did not assemble at the time of the closing prayer.'" Thereupon R. Aqiba changed (his opinion) and taught like Ben Azai.

The times when the delivery of wood (for the altar) was made by priests and people were on nine appointed days: viz., on the 1st day of Nisan, the family of Arah ben Jehudah (made the delivery); on the 20th of Tamuz, the family of David ben Jehudah; on the 5th of Abh, the family of Par'os ben Jehudah; on the 7th of that month, the family of Jonadab ben Rekhab; on the 10th of the same month, the family of Sinaha ben Benjamin; on the 15th of that month, the family of Zathoo ben Jehudah, and with them priests and Levites, and all those who did not know from which tribe they were descended—also the family of Gonebe Eli and the family of Kotze'li Ketzi'oth; and on the 20th, the family of Pa'hath Moab ben Jehudah; on the 20th of Elul, the family of Adin ben Jehudah; and on the 1st of Tebeth, the family of Par'os for the second time.

There was no meeting of the standing men on the 1st of Tebeth; because *Hallel* was sung and additional sacrifice and wood-offering were brought on that day.

Five calamities happened to our ancestors on the 17th of Tamuz, and five on the 9th of Abh: viz., on the 17th of Tamuz the tables of the Holy Law were broken; on that day the

continual daily offerings ceased, and the city of Jerusalem was stormed; on the same date Apostamos burned the Holy Scrolls and placed an idol in the Temple;—on the 9th of Abh it was decreed that our ancestors should not enter the Holy Land; on that day the first and second Temples were destroyed, the city of Bethar was taken, and the site (of Jerusalem) was ploughed up (like a field). From the 1st of Abh it is incumbent upon a person to lessen his participation in joyful events (until after the 9th of that month).

During the week in which the 9th of Abh occurs, it is prohibited to a person to shave himself, or to wash (his clothes), but on Thursday this is allowed in honor of the Sabbath. On the day before the 9th of Abh a person should not partake of two different kinds of dishes of meat, nor may he drink any wine. Rabbon Simeon ben Gamaliel says: "He should change" (his ordinary mode of living). R. Jehudah considers it obligatory for a person to turn over the bed places,\* but the sages do not coincide with him.

Rabbon Simeon ben Gamaliel said: Never were there any more joyous festivals in Israel than the 15th of Abh and the Day of Atonement, for on them the maidens of Jerusalem used to go out dressed in white garments—borrowed ones, however, in order not to cause shame to those who had none of their own. These clothes were also to be previously immersed, and thus the maidens went out and danced in the vineyards, saying: Young men, look and observe well whom you are about to choose (as a spouse); regard not beauty alone, but rather look to a virtuous family, for "false is grace, and vain is beauty: a woman only that feareth the Lord shall indeed be praised" [Proverbs, xxxi. 30]; and it is also said [ibid. 31]: "Give her of the fruit of her hands, and let her own works praise her in her gates." Thus also is it written (alluding to that custom): "Go forth and look, O ye daughters of Zion, on King Solomon, with the crown wherewith his mother hath crowned him on the day of his espousals, and on the day of the joy of his heart" [Solomon's Song, iii. 11]. "The day of the espousals" refers to the day on which the Law was given, and "the day of the joy of his heart" was that when the building of the Temple was completed. May it soon be rebuilt in our days!

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\* It was the general custom among the Israelites of that day to turn over the couches on which they sate during the day, and slept during the night, on any occasion of mourning and also as a sign of their being in actual mourning.

GEMARA: "*At three periods of the year,*" etc. Is there then an additional prayer on fast-days and for the standing men? The Mishna is not complete, and should read thus: "At three periods of the year the priests shall raise their hands (to bless the people) at each prayer, and among such periods there are days when this is done four times during the day: viz., during the morning, the additional, the afternoon, and the closing prayers; and the three periods of the year are on fast-days, on the fast of the standing men, and on the Day of Atonement." Said R. Na'hman in the name of Rabba bar Abbahu: "Such is the dictum of R. Meir. But the sages maintain that during the morning and additional prayers the priests raise their hands; but not during the afternoon and closing prayers." Whose opinion is that attributed to the sages? That is the opinion of R. Jehudah, as we have learned in the following Boraitha: "In all the four prayers mentioned above, the priests are to raise their hands. This is the dictum of R. Meir, but R. Jehudah said that this is not done in the afternoon and closing prayers, while R. Jose maintains that it is not done in the afternoon prayer, but it *is* done in the closing prayer." Said R. Na'hman: "The Halakha prevails according to the opinion of R. Jose." And so it remains.

Why is it, then, the custom at present that the priests raise their hands in the afternoon prayer of a fast-day? Because the afternoon prayer is said very near to the time of sunset, it is regarded the same as the closing prayer.

"*These standing men,*" etc. How is the Mishna to be understood? The Mishna means to say: "These are the standing men, and the reason of their institution is because it is written," etc.

The rabbis taught: "There are twenty-four watches in the Land of Israel, and of these there are twelve in Jericho. When the watches were to go up to the Temple, half went up from all parts of the Land of Israel to Jerusalem, and the other half from Jericho." Why were half of them in Jericho? Because they had to prepare food and drink for their brethren in Jerusalem.

R. Jehudah said in the name of Samuel: Priests, Levites, and Israelites that compose the division of the standing men prevent, in the event of their absence, the offering of the sacrifices. In a Boraitha we have learned: R. Simeon ben Elazar said: "The priests, Levites, and the musical instruments prevent, by their absence, the offering of the sacrifices," because he

holds that the chanting at the offering of the sacrifices must be accomplished mainly through the musical instruments, and not vocally.

R. Hama bar Guria said in the name of Rabb: Moses established for the Israelites only eight watches; viz., four for the descendants of Elazar the priest and four for those of Ithamar. Subsequently Samuel the prophet increased the number to sixteen, and finally David further increased them to twenty-four, as it is written [I Chronicles, vi. 26]: "In the fortieth year of David were they inquired into, and there were found among them mighty men of valor at Ya'zer and Gil'ad."

The rabbis taught: "Four watches went up out of exile, and they are: Yida'yah, Harim, Pash'hor, and Imar. And the prophets who went with them increased them to twenty-four." How was this done? They threw lots into an urn, and Yida'yah came and drew lots for himself and companions to the number of six. Then came Harim, and drew lots for himself and for his companions to the number of six. Likewise did Pash'hor, and thus also Imar; and the prophets also enacted that, even should Jehoyoreb, the chief of the watches, come up out of exile, he should not displace Yid'ayah, but Yid'ayah should be first, and Jehoyoreb act merely as an additional (to Yid'ayah).

The rabbis taught: The men of the watch would pray that the sacrifices of their brethren should be favorably accepted; and the standing men would congregate in the synagogues and fast four fast-days; viz., from Monday until Thursday, inclusive. On the first fast-day they would fast for those who plied the seas; on the second, for those who traverse the desert; the third, that the children might be saved from the disease of croup; and the last day, for pregnant women and for those suckling their babes—that the former might be happily delivered and the latter retain their strength. On the day preceding the Sabbath they would not fast, in honor of the Sabbath, and most assuredly not on the Sabbath itself. Why did they not fast on Sunday? Said R. Samuel ben Na'hmeni: "Because that is the third day (after man was created)"; and Resh Lakish said: "Because of the second soul that is given to man on the Sabbath, and which leaves him at the close of the Sabbath day" (hence he would be too weak to fast on the following day).

"On Sunday the standing men read, '*In the beginning*,'" etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: The first section, *i.e.*, from the



passage commencing, "In the beginning," until that commencing, "Let there be an expansion," was read by two men, while the second section, commencing, "Let there be an expansion," until, "Let the waters," etc., was read by one man only.

"*The long section of the day was read by two persons,*" etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: During the morning and additional prayers they would enter into the synagogues and read the sections from the Scrolls as usual; but during the afternoon prayer one man would recite the section by heart. Said R. Jose: "May, then, an individual recite a section of the Scriptures by heart in the presence of the entire congregation?" "Therefore," said he, "the entire congregation went in and recited the section by heart, just as they do the Shema' prayer."

"*On the days on which the Hallel was sung, the standing men would not attend,*" etc. What is the difference? (*i.e.*, why, when a wood-offering was brought, was the closing prayer omitted and the afternoon prayer retained?). Because the closing prayer was a rabbinical institution, while the afternoon prayer was a biblical ordinance.

"*The times when the delivery of wood was made by priests and people.*" The rabbis taught: Why did the Mishna have to mention both the times when the priests and when the people made the delivery of wood? Because it was said that when the children of Israel returned from exile they found no wood in the wood-chamber, and the priests contributed the wood of their own accord. In consideration of this fact, the prophets at that time made the enactment that even when the wood-chamber was filled with wood, the priests be allowed to furnish wood of their own accord (and from their own means), as it is written [Nehemiah, x. 35]: "And we—the priests, the Levites, and the people—cast lots concerning the procuring of the wood, to bring it into the house of our God, unto the house of our fathers, at fixed times, year by year, to burn upon the altar of the Lord our God, as it is written in the Law."

"*And with them priests and Levites,*" etc. The rabbis taught: Who were those Gonebe Eli and Kotze Ketzi'oth? It was said that at one time the government decreed that the Israelites should not bring any wood for the altar, nor the firstfruit-offerings to Jerusalem, and guards were appointed to watch the wagons in the same manner as Jeroboam ben Nebat appointed guards to prevent the Israelites from going to Jerusalem for the festivals. What did the pious and those who were



afraid of transgressing do? They would place a basket containing the firstfruits at the bottom of the wagon, and cover it with dried fruits. In addition to that they would carry a pestle, and when stopped by the guards would tell them that they were on their way to a place where they desired to pound the fruit; and after having safely passed the guards, they would ornament the basket containing the firstfruits and bring it into the Temple. And we have learned in a Boraitha, in addition to this, that the Gonebe Eli and the Kotze Ketzi'oth are the same who are called elsewhere the family of Salmai Hanthophathai. Who were the Salmai Hanthophathai? The rabbis taught that when it was decreed that no wood should be brought for the altar they would construct ladders, which they would carry past the guards appointed to watch for any men who would violate the decree, and when stopped would claim that they were about to take down some doves from their dovecots. Having safely eluded the guards and arrived at the Temple, they would take the ladders apart and carry in the wood for the altar.\* To these men and those emulating their example the passage may be applied [Proverbs, x. 7]: "The memory of the just is to be blessed."

"*On the 20th, the family Pa'hath Moab ben Jehudah,*" etc. In a Boraitha we have learned: By "the family Pa'hath Moab ben Jehudah" is meant the family of David ben Jehudah (meaning David the King of the tribe of Judah). Such is the opinion of R. Meir; but R. Jose said that they were of the children of Joab ben Tzeruyah.

"*On the 20th of Elul, the family of Adin ben Jehudah,*" etc. The rabbis taught: By "the family of Adin ben Jehudah" is meant the family of David ben Jehudah. Such is the opinion of R. Jehudah; but R. Jose said that they were of the children of Joab ben Tzeruyah.

"*There was no meeting of the standing men on the 1st of Tebeth.*" Said Rabha: The Hallel which is sung on the feast of new moon is not based upon a biblical ordinance, because R. Johanan said in the name of R. Simeon ben Jehozadok: "Eighteen times during the year an individual may recite the

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\* The names Gonebe Eli, Kotze Ketzi'oth, and Salmai Hanthophathai were not in reality proper names, but signified the following: Gonebe Eli means those who stole the pestle; Ketzi'oth means dry figs or cinnamon, from the Arabic cassia; and Salmai is derived from the word Sulam, a ladder. The connection is easily established, as alluding to the means employed by those pious men safely to elude the guards appointed to watch for the firstfruits and the wood for the altar.

whole Hallel, and they are: On the eight days of the Feast of Tabernacles, on the eight days of the Feast of Dedication (Hanukah), on the first day of the Passover, and on the day of Pentecost. While in exile, however, one may recite it twenty-one times during the year, namely: On the nine days of the festival of Tabernacles, on the eight days of Hanukah, on the first two days of Passover, and on the two days of Pentecost."

Rabh happened to be in Babylon (*i.e.*, before he removed there permanently) and he saw the people reading the Hallel on the first day of the month. He first intended to interrupt them, but seeing that they read only portions of it, he said: I understand they follow the customs of their ancestors, and it does not matter. In a Boraitha we have learned that an individual shall not start, but if he had already started he may conclude it.

"*Five calamities happened to our ancestors,*" etc. Whence do we know that on the 17th day of Tamuz the tables of the Holy Law were broken? Because we have learned in a Boraitha as follows: On the sixth day of Sivan the ten commandments were given, and on the seventh day Moses ascended unto heaven. R. Jose says: "On the seventh day the ten commandments were given." All agree, however, that on the seventh day of Sivan Moses ascended unto heaven, because it is written [Exodus, xxiv. 16]: "And he called unto Moses on the seventh day out of the midst of the cloud"; and further, it is said [ibid. 18]: "And Moses went into the midst of the cloud, and ascended the mount; and Moses was on the mount forty days and forty nights." Thus Moses was there twenty-four days in Sivan and sixteen days in Tamuz, and on the 17th he descended and broke the tables, as it is written [ibid. xxxii. 19]: "And it came to pass, when he (Moses) came nigh unto the camp, and he saw the calf and the dancing, that the anger of Moses waxed hot, and he cast from his hands the tables, and broke them at the foot of the mount."

That the continual daily offerings ceased on the 17th of Tamuz is traditional; and the statement that the city was stormed on that day refers to the second destruction. That the other two calamities occurred on that day is also traditional.

"*On the 9th of Abh it was decreed,*" etc. Whence do we know that? From the following Boraitha: We have learned that on the twenty-ninth day of Sivan Moses sent out the spies, as it is written [Numb. xiii. 25]: "And they returned from spying out the land at the end of forty days," and those forty

days (included the day of their return, that is) were in reality forty less one, and Abayi said that in that year the month of Tamuz was a full month of thirty days, as it is written [Lam. i. 15]: "He hath called an assembly against me to crush my young men." \*

Further, it is written [Numb. xiv. 1]: "And all the congregation lifted up their voice, and cried aloud, and the people wept that night." Said Rabba in the name of R. Johanan: "That night was the eve preceding the ninth of Abh, and the Holy One, blessed be He, said: 'Ye have cried on this night in vain, and I shall ordain it that your generations shall lament on this day forever.'"

*"On that day the first and second Temples were destroyed."* It is written [II Kings, xxv. 8]: "And in the fifth month, on the seventh day of the month," etc., and [Jeremiah, lii. 12]: "And in the fifth month, on the tenth day of the month." It cannot be said that on the seventh day the calamity occurred, because it is also written "on the tenth." Neither can it be said that it happened "on the tenth," because it says "on the seventh"—hence it must be assumed that entrance to the Temple was gained by the enemy on the seventh, and they ate and did damage therein on the seventh, on the eighth, and on the ninth. Toward the evening of the ninth they set it on fire, and it continued to burn all day on the tenth, as it is written [ibid. vi. 4]: "Wo unto us! for the day waneth, for the shadows of the evening are stretched out." And this bears out the statement of R. Johanan, who said as follows: "Were I living in those days, I would have ordained the fast for the 10th of Abh; for on that day the greater part of the temple was burned." The sages of that day, however, held that the day when the calamity began should be observed as a fast-day.

Whence do we know that the second Temple was also destroyed on the 9th of Abh? We have learned in a Boraitha: "A happy event is credited to the day on which another happy event happened, while a calamity is ascribed to the day when another calamity occurred; and it was said that when the first Temple was destroyed it was on the eve preceding the 9th of Abh, which was also the night at the close of the Sabbath and also the close of the Sabbatical year. The watch at the time

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\* How it is inferred from the passage is not understood by us, nor explained by any commentary.

was that of Jehoyoreb, and the Levites were chanting in their proper places, at that moment reciting the passage [Psalms, xciv. 23]: "And he will bring back upon them their own injustice, and in their own wickedness will he destroy them"; and they did not have time to end the passage, which concludes, "yea, he will destroy them—the Lord our God," before the enemy entered and took possession of the Temple. This happened also at the destruction of the second Temple.

That the city of Bethar was taken on the 9th of Abh is traditional.

"*And the site was ploughed up like a field.*" We have learned in a Boraitha: When Torosnopos the Wicked destroyed the Temple, a decree was promulgated that Rabbon Gamaliel (the First) should be executed. A certain master came into the house of learning, and said that the man of the nose\* was being looked for (*i.e.*, the most prominent member of the community). R. Gamaliel understood that he was meant thereby, and hid himself. The same master surreptitiously came to the place where R. Gamaliel was concealed and asked him if, should he (the master) be instrumental in saving his (R. Gamaliel's) life, he would assure him a share in the world to come, and R. Gamaliel answered that he would. The master then demanded that he swear to it, and R. Gamaliel swore. Thereupon the master ascended to an attic, threw himself down, and died. The tradition goes on to say that if one of the signers of a death-warrant or any other unfavorable decree died, the decree became null and void. Thus was Rabbon Gamaliel saved. A heavenly Voice then came forth, and declared that the master would have a share in the world to come.

The rabbis taught: When the first Temple was destroyed, groups of young priests, who had the keys of the Temple, went up to the roof and said: "Creator of the Universe! it being that we were not destined to live and be trustworthy keepers of thy treasure, we herewith return the keys." With that they threw the keys up into the air, and something like a hand was seen to come forth and grasp them, whereupon the priests immediately threw themselves down into the fire beneath. They were mourned by Isaiah the prophet in the verses [Isaiah, xxii. 1 and

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\* The expression in the original is 'Hotam, meaning *nose*; but Abraham Krochmal asserts that 'Hotam should read 'Hotham, meaning a *seal*, and thus the passage would read "the man of the seal," *i.e.*, the prince of the community.



2]: "The doom of the valley of vision. What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the roofs? O noiseful, tumultuous city, joyous town! thy slain ones are not slain with the sword, and not those that die in battle."

"*From the 1st of Abh it is incumbent upon a person to lessen his participation in joyful events.*" Said R. Jehudah, the son of R. Samuel bar Shilath, in the name of Rabh: "As from the 1st of Abh participation in joyful events must be lessened, so, as soon as the month of Adar enters, joyous festivities should be increased."

"*During the week in which the 9th of Abh occurs,*" etc. Said R. Na'hman: "The washing of clothes is prohibited only when they are washed for the purpose of immediate wear, but it is allowed to wash clothes and put them away for future wear." R. Shesheth, however, said that even washing for future wear is also not allowed, and the proof is that the laundresses of Rabh would stop work on that entire week. It was taught also that R. Benjamin said in the name of R. Elazar: "Washing for immediate wear is prohibited during that week, but for future wear it is permitted."

An objection was raised: We have learned: "It is not allowed to wash clothes before the 9th of Abh, even if they be intended for use after the 9th. In those days the washing of the clothes was similar to our laundrying, and as for linen garments the prohibition is not effective (only for silk garments)?" The objection remains.

R. Itz'hak bar Giuri in the name of R. Johanan sent word, saying: "Although the prohibition against washing does not apply to linen garments, still it is not allowed to put on such garments during the week in which the 9th of Abh occurs." Said Rabh: "This applies only to the days preceding the 9th of Abh, but not to those succeeding it," while Samuel said that even on the days following the 9th of Abh it is also not allowed.

This constitutes a difference of opinion among Tanaim, as we learn in the following Boraitha: "If the ninth day of Abh falls on a Sabbath, or even if the eighth falls on a Sabbath, one may eat and drink whatever he chooses, and may place on his table even such viands as were eaten by Solomon while he was yet king. He must not shave or wash (his clothes) from the day of the new moon until after the fast of the 9th of Abh. Such is the dictum of R. Meir. R. Jehudah, however, says that it is



not allowed to do this the entire month of Abh; but R. Simeon ben Gamaliel maintains that the prohibition applies only to the week in which the 9th of Abh occurs."

In another Boraitha we have learned: "A man should be in a state of mourning from the first day of Abh until after the fast-day. Such is the dictum of R. Meir. R. Jehudah, however, says that during the entire month one is not allowed to do things prohibited for a mourner; but R. Simeon ben Gamaliel maintains that one must be in such a state only during the week in which the 9th of Abh occurs." (Hence the difference of opinion between Rabh and Samuel arises from the fact that Rabh holds with R. Meir, while Samuel holds with the other Tanaim.)

Said R. Johanan: "All the three Tanaim of the Boraitha quoted derived their teachings from the following passage [Hosea, ii. 13]: 'And I will cause to cease all her mirth, her festival, her new moon, and her Sabbath,' etc. The Tana who teaches that one should be in a state of mourning from the 1st of Abh on, derives his teaching from the word 'festival' in the passage, because the 1st, being New Moon, is a festival. The Tana who applies his teaching to the whole month derives it from the words 'new moon,' and infers that it means the entire month; and the Tana who applies his teaching only to the week in which the 9th of Abh occurs, derives it from the word 'Sabbath,' and infers that it means the week of that Sabbath."

Said Rabha: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Meir," and on another occasion he said: "It prevails according to R. Simeon ben Gamaliel"; and by both statements he meant to render the more lenient construction of the ordinance. Thus it was necessary to make both statements. For had he said that the Halakha prevails only according to R. Meir, the state of mourning would extend for the nine days from the 1st to the 9th of Abh inclusive; and had he said that the Halakha prevails only according to R. Simeon ben Gamaliel, the state of mourning would extend over the days following the 9th of Abh in the same week. By citing both decrees, however, the ordinance is made more lenient, in that the state of mourning commences only with the first day of the week in which the 9th occurs and ends with the 9th itself.

"On the day before the 9th of Abh a person should not partake of two dishes." Said R. Jehudah: "This applies only to the time from the sixth hour on (12 M.), but previous to that time

it may be done." And again he said: This applies only to the concluding meal, but during the other meals he may eat what he chooses, and both statements are intended for the more lenient construction of the ordinance (*i.e.*, if one eats his last meal before noon, or if he eats a meal after noon but intends to eat again before the fast commences, he may in either case eat as many dishes as he chooses). We have learned in a Boraitha: On the eve of the 9th of Abh one must not eat two dishes, nor eat meat nor drink wine. R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, however, said: "He shall make a change." Said R. Jehudah: "What is meant by making a change? *E.g.*, if he usually eats two dishes, he shall now eat one; if he usually eats in the company of ten men, he shall now eat in the company of five; if his custom is to drink ten cups of wine, he shall now drink five. But all this applies to the time from the sixth hour on; but previously to the sixth hour, everything is permitted." In another Boraitha we have learned: On the eve of the 9th of Abh one should not eat two dishes, nor eat meat, nor drink wine. So is the decree of R. Meir. The sages, however, said: "He shall make a change, and shall use less meat and wine. How so? If his custom had been to eat a *littre* of meat, he shall now eat one-half of it; if his custom had been to drink a *lug* of wine, he shall now drink one-half of a *lug*; but if his custom had been to drink no wine at all, he must not drink it at all—even a drop." R. Simeon b. Gamaliel said: "If his custom had been to eat radishes or something salt, after his meal, he may continue to do it." In yet another Boraitha we have learned: "In case of the concluding meal before the 9th of Abh he must not eat meat, neither drink wine, nor wash himself; but if this meal is not the concluding meal, he may eat meat and drink wine, but must not wash." R. Ishmael, the son of R. Jose, however, said in the name of his father: "As long as it is allowed to eat meat, it is allowed to wash one's self also."

The rabbis taught: All ordinances applicable to a mourner are effective for all (Israelites) on the 9th of Abh; viz., one must not eat, drink, anoint himself, wear shoes, or have sexual intercourse. The Pentateuch, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa must not be read. The Mishna, Gemara, and Midrash must not be studied, nor Halakhoth or Haggadoth discussed; but something which one has not previously read he may read, and may study something which he had never before studied. The school-children must not learn on that day, because it is written

[Psalms, xix. 9]: "The precepts of the Lord are upright, rejoicing the heart." R. Jehudah, however, says that one must not even read something new to him nor study anything which is new to him; but all agree that one may read Job, Lamentations, and the evil prophecies of Jeremiah, and the school-children must be idle on that day.

"*Nor drink any wine.*" We have learned in a Boraitha: One may eat salt meat and drink wine still in a state of fermentation (on the day before the 9th). How long must the meat lie in salt in order to be classed as salt meat which may be eaten? Said R. Hinana bar Kahana in the name of Samuel: As long as the time during which a peace-offering may be eaten; *i.e.*, if meat lie in salt two days and one night it is not yet salt meat, but if it lie longer it may be eaten on that day. The prohibition concerning drinking wine that has been standing uncovered does not apply to wine in a state of fermentation, and how long is wine in such a state? Three days.

R. Jehudah said in the name of Rabh: "Such was the custom of R. Jehudah bar R. Ilayi: On the night preceding the 9th of Abh, dry bread with salt and a jug of water were brought to him; he would sit behind the oven and eat the bread and drink the water, and his manner was the same as if the dead body of a near relative were lying before him." In a Boraitha we have learned: To him who eats meat and drinks wine on the 9th of Abh is applied the passage [Ezekiel, xxxii. 27]: "And their iniquities were upon their bones."

"*But the sages do not coincide with him.*" Said Rabha: "The Halakha prevails according to the sages."

"*On the 15th of Abh and on the Day of Atonement,*" etc. It is right that the Day of Atonement should be a day of rejoicing, because that is a day of forgiveness, and on that day the second tables of the Law were given to Moses; but why should the 15th of Abh be a day of rejoicing? Said R. Jehudah in the name of Samuel: "On that day it was permitted to the members of the different tribes to intermarry." Whence is this deduced? Because it is written [Numb. xxxvi. 6]: "This is the thing which the Lord hath commanded concerning the daughters of Zelophead," etc., they claim that "this is the thing" implies that only for that generation was it decreed, but for later generations the decree does not apply.

R. Joseph in the name of R. Na'hman said: On that day the members of the tribe of Benjamin were permitted to intermarry

with the other tribes, as it is written [Judges, xxi. 1]: "Now the men of Israel had sworn in Mizpah, saying: Not any one of us shall give his daughter unto Benjamin for wife." Whence was it deduced that subsequently permission might be given to intermarry with the tribe of Benjamin? Because the quoted passage says "Any one of us," and Rabh said that their descendants were not included in the vow.

Rabba bar bar Hana said in the name of R. Johanan: On that day the last of those who were destined to die in the desert died, and the destiny was thus fulfilled; for the Master said that so long as the destiny was still unfulfilled, the Lord did not speak to Moses for his particular sake, as it is written [Deut. ii. 16 and 17]: "So it came to pass, when all the men of war were spent by dying from the midst of the people, that the Lord spoke unto me, saying"; and "unto me" signifies that the Lord spoke unto Moses in particular.

Ula said: "On that day the guards appointed by Jeroboam to prevent the Israelites from coming to Jerusalem were abolished by Hoshea the son of Elah, and he said: 'Let them go wherever they choose.'"

R. Mathnah said: "On that day permission was given to bury the dead who were killed in battle at the city of Bethar." And R. Mathnah said again: "On that day, when it was permitted to bury those killed at Bethar, the assembly at Yamnia ordained the benediction reading: 'Blessed art thou, God the good, that doth good.' What is meant thereby? By 'good' is meant that the bodies were not left to putrefy, and by 'doth good' that burial was permitted."

Rabba and R. Joseph both said: On that day they ceased to cut wood for the altar, as we have learned in a Boraitha: R. Eliezer the Great said: "From the fifteenth day of Abh the heat of the sun was lessened and the timber was no longer dry, so they ceased to cut wood for the altar." [Said R. Menasseh: "That day was called the day on which the saws were broken"], and from that day on, he who adds the night to his time for study may have years and days added to his life.

"*In white garments—borrowed ones,*" etc. The rabbis taught: The king's daughter borrowed from the daughter of the high-priest; the daughter of the latter would borrow from the daughter of the Segan (assistant); the Segan's daughter would borrow from the daughter of the priest who was anointed for the war [see Deut. xx. 2]; and she in turn would borrow



from the daughter of an ordinary priest. The daughters of the ordinary Israelites would borrow one from the other, in order not to put to shame those who had none of their own.

" *These clothes were also to be immersed.*" Said R. Eliezer: " Even if the clothes were folded and laid in a chest, they must also be immersed."

" *The maidens went out and danced,*" etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: Those that had no wives would go there to procure a spouse.

" *Saying: ' Young men, look and observe,' "* etc. The rabbis taught: The pretty ones among the maidens would say: " Regard but beauty alone, because a woman is made only for beauty." Those among them who were of good family would say: " Rather look to a good family," for women are but made to bear children (and those of good family produce good children). The ill-favored ones among them would say: " Make your selections only for the glory of Heaven, but provide liberally for us."

Said Ula Biraah in the name of R. Elazar: " In the future the Holy One, blessed be He, will make a ring of the righteous, and He will sit among them in the garden of Eden, and they everyone will point to Him with their fingers, as it is written [Isaiah, xxv. 9]: ' And men will say on that day, Lo, this is our God, for whom we have waited that He would help us: this is the Lord, for whom we have waited; we will be glad and we will rejoice in His salvation.' "





TRACT MEGILLA (BOOK OF ESTHER).



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# SYNOPSIS OF SUBJECTS

OF

## VOLUME VIII.—TRACT MEGILLA.

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# TRACT MEGILLA.

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## CHAPTER I.

REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE TIME WHEN THE BOOK OF ESTHER  
MUST BE READ ON THE RABBINICAL FEAST OF PURIM IN OPEN  
TOWNS AND WALLED CITIES, ETC.

MISHNA: The Megilla is read sometimes on the 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, or on the 15th of the month Adar, neither earlier nor later. Cities which, from the time of Joshua the son of Nun, were surrounded with walls, read it on the 15th. Villages and large open towns should read it on the 14th, and inhabitants of villages may read it in advance on the day of assembly.\* How is this to be understood? When the 14th fell on Monday, inhabitants of villages and of large open towns used to read it on that day, and those of walled cities on the day following. When it fell on Tuesday or Wednesday, the inhabitants of villages used to read it in advance (the preceding Monday) on the day of assembly, those of large open towns on that day (the 14th), and those of walled towns on the morrow. When it fell on Thursday, inhabitants of villages and large open towns used to read it on that day, and of walled towns on the following day. If it fell on the eve of Sabbath, inhabitants of villages read it in advance on the preceding or day of assembly, and those of large open towns and of walled towns on that day (14th). When it fell on Sabbath, inhabitants of villages and large open towns read it in advance on the preceding Thursday, the day of assembly; and of walled towns on the morrow (the Sunday). When it fell on Sunday, in villages they read it on the preceding day of assembly (Thursday), and in large open towns on that day (14th), and in walled cities on the morrow.

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\* In the time of the Mishna the tribunals of justice kept the courts open on Mondays or Thursdays for the sake of the men who came to the markets, which were usually on these days. The reading of the Holy Scrolls in the synagogues was also on these days, and therefore they were called "days of assembly."

GEMARA: The Megilla was read on the 11th day. Whence do we deduce this? Whence do we deduce this! (Is this, then, a biblical commandment, which you want to deduce from the passages of the Bible? This is only rabbinical), and as it will be explained further on, the sages made it easier for the inhabitants of villages, who usually came to the towns on Mondays and Thursdays, that they should read then the Book of Esther, and should have time to provide their brethren of the towns with water and with food? We meant to say so: let us see. The reading of the Megilla the men of the Great Assembly have ordained. Now, at the first glance, if the men of the Great Assembly had ordained it should be on the 14th and 15th, have then the sages the power to abolish the ordinances of the Great Assembly? Have we not learned in a Mishna that a Beth Din is not able to abolish the ordinances of its colleagues unless they are greater than they in wisdom and in members? Therefore we must say that all the mentioned days were ordained by the Great Assembly. Where, then, is the hint in the Bible for it? Said R. Shamen bar Abba in the name of R. Johanan: It is written [Esther, ix. 31]: "To confirm these days of Purim in their times." In their *times*: this signifies that many times are to be ordained. But if so, say even the 16th and 17th? Nay, it is written [ibid. 27]: "So that no-one should trespass it." That means, it must never be after the appointed time. R. Samuel bar Na'hmani, however, said: It is written [ibid. 22]: "like those days whereon the Jews had rest from their enemies." And those "days" are plural, meaning two; "like the days" means to add also the 11th and the 12th. But perhaps it is the 12th and the 13th? Said R. Samuel bar Itz'hak: The 13th day was the time when all Israel in all places were assembled to take revenge on their enemies, and it is certain that such a day must not be added from the verse, because this day was the day of the main miracle; and therefore if you add something, it can be only the 11th and the 12th. But again, perhaps it is the 16th and 17th? That is already explained by the verse: "He shall not trespass." Said Rabba bar bar Hanah in the name of R. Johanan: This is only according to R. Aqiba, according to whom are many anonymous Mishnas; but the sages say that in our time, (when the messengers are no longer sent) and the people look to the reading of the Megilla as to a sign of the coming feast-day (of Passover), therefore it must be read only in its main time (14th). And so we have learned also in a Boraitha:

R. Jehudah said: The old ordinance was only when the years were fixed (by the court in Palestine), and Israel dwelt on its own land; but in our time, when they look to make the feast only when the Megilla is read, it must be read only in its time. Did R. Jehudah say so? Did not we learn in another Boraitha that *R. Jehudah* said that the ordinance was only in those places where the people from the villages came to the towns on Mondays and Thursdays; but in the places where they do not come, it must be read only in its main time? From this we see that where they come, even in our time, they can read it not in its appointed time, and this contradicts his teaching above. This contradiction was made by R. Ashi, and he answered it: That one Boraitha is not according to R. Jehudah, but according to R. Jose his son.

*"Cities which, from the time of Joshua b. Nun,"* etc. How do we deduce this from the Book of Esther? Said Rabba: It is written [ibid. ix. 19]: "Therefore do the Jews of the villages that dwell in the unwalled towns," etc. Now, when the inhabitants of the unwalled towns read on the 14th, it is self-evident that the inhabitants of the walled towns read on the 15th. But perhaps the inhabitants of unwalled towns read on the 14th, but of walled towns do not read at all? Do not read at all! Are they not Israelites? And furthermore, it is written [ibid. 30]: "And he sent letters unto all the Jews, to the hundred and twenty-seven provinces of the kingdom of Ahasuerus,"\* and that means all Israel? But perhaps it means the inhabitants of open towns should read on the 14th only, and those of walled towns should read on both the 14th and 15th, as it is written [ibid. 21]: "To take it on themselves as a duty that they should celebrate the fourteenth day of the month Adar, and the fifteenth day of the same, in each and every year." If it would read, "the fourteenth *and* the fifteenth," it would be right as you said; but when it is written, "the fourteenth day," separately, and "the fifteenth," separately, that means that the inhabitants of open towns should celebrate on the fourteenth, and those of walled towns on the fifteenth. But this is only about the celebration, which means the eating and the drinking; but the reading of the Megilla, which is only a memorial, whence do we deduce that this is also different? It is written [ibid. 28]:

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\* The text says it is written "from India to Ethiopia" and refers to verse 9, chap. viii., but as there it is written not about the Book of Esther, we have cited the other verse.



“And these days are remembered *and* celebrated.” And we compare the celebration to the remembering; as the celebration is different, so is the remembering.

But what is the reason of the Tana of our Mishna, who says “walled towns from the time of Joshua b. Nun”? He makes an analogy of expression: it is written here, “therefore the Jews of the unwalled towns”; and it is written [Deut. iii. 5], “besides the unwalled towns.” As thereby unwalled towns are meant those from the time of Joshua, so also is it meant here.

Our Mishna will not be in accordance with R. Joshua b. Kor’ha of the following Boraitha: R. Joshua b. Kor’ha said: The inhabitants of towns surrounded with walls from the times of Ahasuerus should read on the 15th. What is his reason? It shall be as in Shushan? As in Shushan they read on the 15th, so all towns surrounded with a wall shall read on the 15th. But the inhabitants of Shushan itself act according to whom? It is certainly not in accordance with the sages, because it was not surrounded with a wall in the time of Joshua b. Nun? Said Rabha, and according to others Kdi: The case with Shushan is different, for there was the miracle, and they feasted on the 15th. R. Joshua b. Levi said: A large city, and its neighborhood, and all the places around that can be seen with it, must be considered like the large city itself. But how much distance is meant? Said R. Jeremiah, according to others R. Hyya bar Abba, as the distance from Hamtn to Tiberia, which was a mile. The same says again: The double letters in the Hebrew alphabet—Mem, Nun, Zadik, Pe, Kaph—the prophets have added. Is this possible? Is it not written [Lev. xxvii. 34]: “*These* are the commandments”; from which we infer *these* are the commandments, and no prophet has the power to make new ones from that time? And furthermore, did not R. Hisda say that the Mem (when it is the last letter of the word) and Samekh (which is round), which were chased through the tables of Moses, were held in only by a miracle? This is so, but it was not before known which letter must be in the middle of the word and which at the end; and the prophets ordained that the open one should be at the middle and the closed one final.\* But even that much had they then the right to do? Therefore we must say that it was forgotten and the prophets only restored them. The same

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\* The open one, e.g., מ; the closed one, as נ. So also with the other letters.

authority says again: The Targum (translation) of the Pentateuch was made by Unkelas the Proselyte under the supervision of R. Eliezer and R. Joshua; the Targum of the Prophets—by Jonathan b. Uziel under the supervision of the three prophets Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. Then the ground of Palestine trembled (as if shaken by an earthquake) four hundred Parsaoth square, and a heavenly voice was heard: Who are these who have revealed My Mystery to man? Then Jonathan b. Uziel arose and said: "I am the one who hath revealed Thy Mystery to man, but it is known unto Thee that not to my honor, nor in honor of the house of my father I did this, but for Thy glory, to prevent controversies in Israel." He intended to do the same with the Hagiographa, when a heavenly voice was heard: "Refrain from doing this." Why so? Because in the Hagiographa the time of Messiah's arrival would be known if it should be translated (and this must be hidden).

Why at the translation of the Pentateuch did not the ground tremble, and at the translation of the Prophets it trembled? Because the Pentateuch is almost all explained; but in the Prophets there are many things not explained at all. As it is written [Zechariah, xii. 11]: "On that day will the lamentation be great in Jerusalem, like the lamentation at Hadad-rimman in the valley of Megiddon." And R. Joseph said, but for the translation of this verse, I would not know at all what it means. The translation is: "On this day will the mourning in Jerusalem be as it was over Ahab b. Amri, that was killed by Hadad-rimman b. Tabrimon in the city of Ramoth Gilead, and as they mourned over Joshia b. Aman, who was killed by Pharaoh Necho (the lame one) in the valley of Megiddon."

It is written [Dan. x. 7]: "And I, Daniel, saw alone this appearance, but the men that were with me did not see the appearance; nevertheless a great terror fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves." Who were these men? Said R. Jeremiah, according to others R. Hyya b. Abba: They were Haggai, Zechariah, and Malachi. They were better than he, because they were prophets, and he, Daniel, was not a prophet. And he was better than they because he saw it, and they did not see it. But if they did not see, why fell a terror upon them? Although they did not see literally, they saw it clairvoyantly. Said Rabbina: From this we may infer that whoso is terrified, although he does not himself see, he sees clairvoyantly.

We have learned in a Boraitha: The priests during their ser-

vice, Levites from their balcony, and the Israelites standing around, all must leave their places to go and hear the reading of the Book of Esther. And so also said R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh. This the houses of learning took as their support when they stopped the learning of the Law, and went to hear the reading of the Megilla. They draw an *à fortiori* conclusion from the Temple service: as the Temple service, which was very vigorous, they stopped for the sake of the Megilla, the learning of the Law so much the more. But did not R. Samuel bar Unia say that the learning of the Law is greater than the daily sacrifices? It presents no difficulty; the learning of an individual is not greater than Temple service, but the learning of a congregation together is greater.

Rabha said: It is certain to me that of the Temple service and the reading of the Megilla the latter has the preference, as it is said above. Between the studying of the Law and the reading of the Megilla the latter has the preference, as did the houses of learning. Between the studying of the Law and the burying of a dead man who has no friends the latter has the preference. Between the Temple service and the burying of a dead man the latter has the preference. But what is doubtful to me is, if a man has to read the Megilla and to bury a man who has no friends, which has the preference? Shall we assume the Megilla has the preference, because it proclaims the miracle; or the burying has preference, for the honor of man? After he had considered, he himself decided that the burying has preference, as the Master said (Sabbath, p. 85): Great is the honor of man, which supersedes even a negative commandment of the Torah. The text says: R. Joshua b. Levi said that "a large city and its neighborhood," etc., are considered as the city itself. We have learned in a Boraitha, in addition to this: If it is in the neighborhood, even if it cannot be seen from a distance together with the city; and when it can be seen with the city, although it is not near the city. (This is explained, when the city is in a valley or on a mountain.)

R. Joshua b. Levi says again: A city where the inhabitants had resided before, and later it was surrounded with a wall, must be considered as a village. Why so? Because it is written [Lev. xxv. 29]: "And if a man sell a dwelling-house in a walled city." Whence we may infer that the city was walled before he dwelt in it, but not if he had dwelt in it and afterward it was walled. He says again: A city where there are not ten

unemployed men \* who devote all their time to the study of the Law must be considered as a village. What does he come to teach us? Did we not learn this in the following Mishna: What is called a great city? If there are ten unemployed men and less than this it is a village? His teaching is needed to tell us that, even if it was a great city and men came thither from the whole world, if there are fewer than ten men unemployed there, it is considered as a village. The same says again: A large city that was destroyed, and afterward was rebuilt, must be considered as a large city. What is meant by destroying? Shall we assume it is meant that the walls were destroyed? Then if they were only rebuilt it is considered a large city, and not otherwise? Did we not learn in a Boraitha, R. Eliezer b. R. Jose said: It is written [ibid. 30]: "The house in the city which has a wall," from which we infer, which has had a wall previously, even though it has not now? Nay, what is meant by the expression "destroyed" is, that it has not now ten unemployed men (who learn the Law). R. Joshua b. Levi says again: It is obligatory for women to hear the reading of the Megilla, because they benefited also by the same miracle. He says again: If the Feast of Purim falls on Sabbath, it may be lectured about the duties of this day (Purim). Why only the Feast of Esther? Is this not a rule for all festivals? Did we not learn in a Boraitha: Moses ordained that the Israelites should lecture on the duties of each day: the Halakhoth of Passover on Passover, those of Pentecost on Pentecost, and those of Tabernacles on the Feast of Tabernacles? One might say, we shall take a precautionary measure not to lecture about the Megilla, lest one carry it four ells in public ground. As Rabha explains further on, he comes to teach us that such a precautionary measure is not taken about lecturing. The same says again: So also said R. Helbu in the name of Ulla: One is obliged to read the Megilla in the evening, and to repeat it in the daytime, as it is written [Ps. xxx. 13]: "To the end that my glorious soul may sing praise to thee, and never be silent. O Lord my God! forever will I give thanks unto thee." (As this psalm in the Pesiqtha is interpreted to refer to Mordecai and Esther, he explains "may sing praise to thee" means to read the Megilla in the night, and "never be silent" means to read it in the day.)

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\* The Hebrew term for this is "Batlonim." The true meaning is that every city must hire ten persons who shall do nothing but study and pray.



"*Inhabitants of villages shall read,*" etc. R. Hanina said: The sages made it easier for the inhabitants of villages to read on the days of assembly, because they usually supply with water and food the inhabitants of towns on those days.

"*How is to be understood? 'If it falls on Monday,'*" etc. Why, in the first part of the Mishna, does it begin with the order of the days of the month and when it comes to explain it, it begins with the order of the days of the week? (It does not say "read on the 15th," but "on the morrow.") Because confusion between the numbers of the days in the month and in the week would have arisen, therefore it begins with the dates of the month alone.

"*If it fell on the eve of Sabbath,*" etc. According to whom is this Mishna? According to Rabbi, or according to R. Jose? Which Rabbi and R. Jose? Of the following Boraitha: If it falls on the eve of Sabbath, villages and large open cities used to read it on the day of assembly, and inhabitants of walled towns read it on that same day. Said Rabbi: I say that the large open towns must not have the appointed time postponed, and must be equal to walled towns, and both read the same day. And which R. Jose? From the following Tosephtha: If it falls on the eve of Sabbath, the inhabitants of walled towns and villages read on the day of assembly, and the large open cities read on the appointed day. R. Jose, however, said: The inhabitants of walled towns do not read in advance of those of the large cities, but both read on the appointed day. But does Rabbi hold that for the inhabitants of large cities we do not change for the day of assembly? Did we not learn in another Boraitha: If the Feast of Purim falls on Sabbath, the inhabitants of villages read in advance on the previous assembly day, and the inhabitants of large open cities read on the eve of Sabbath, and those of walled towns on the day following? As the appointed day has already been changed for the inhabitants of large cities for the previous day, (I say) it shall be fixed on a day before, which is the assembly day? What comparison is this? In case of the above Boraitha the right-time was on Sabbath, and as they had it changed it was set two days before; but in the previous Boraitha the right-time was the eve of Sabbath, why should it be changed? According to whom is what R. Helbu said in the name of R. Huna, as follows: If the Feast of Purim fall on Sabbath all is postponed for the day of assembly (Thursday). [What is meant by "all"? Is it possible, "all"? Do not the inhab-



itants of a walled town read it on the Sabbath itself? It means, for those for whom it has to be postponed, it shall be set on the assembly day.] This will be according to Rabbi.

We see, however, that all agree that the Megilla must not be read on the Sabbath. Why so? Said Rabha: All are obliged to read the Megilla, but not all are able to read it; and this is a precautionary measure, lest one take the Megilla in his hand and go with it to an expert to learn to read it, and at the same time he will carry four ells in public ground. (Therefore it must not be read on Sabbath at all.) And the same is the reason why we do not blow the cornet on the New Year's day when it falls on Sabbath, and do not use the Lulab on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles when it falls on Sabbath. R. Jose said: Here is another reason: It is because the poor hope only for the day when the Megilla is read to receive gifts, a thing which cannot be done on Sabbath. We have learned the same also in the following Boraitha: Because it was said that the inhabitants of villages read in advance on the day of assembly, the charity that must be given on that feast shall be collected and distributed on the same day, because the poor hope only for the day when the Megilla is read. The enjoyment of eating and drinking, however, must be only on the appointed time.

Rabh said: If the Megilla is read in the right-time, it may be read even by an individual; but if not on the right-time, then only when ten men are together. R. Assi, however, said: In both instances it must be read only when ten men are together. It happened once that Rabh had not ten men: he took the trouble to assemble ten men because of R. Assi's decision.

MISHNA: What must be considered as a large town? Any town in which there are ten *Batlonim*. Should there be less than that number, it is legally considered a village. It was said with respect to these, that "it may be done sooner, but not later"; but the day of the delivery of wood for the priests, the fast on the 9th of Abh, the festive sacrifices, and the day of assembly (to fast and pray for rain) are to be postponed to a later day, but must not be kept before their proper time.

Although it was said in respect to the reading of the Megilla that it may be done earlier but not later, it is yet permitted on these days to pronounce funeral orations and to fast, also to give the gifts to the poor. Said R. Jehudah: When is it allowed to read the Megilla before its proper time? In places where it is customary for the country people to assemble in the towns on

Mondays and Thursdays; but where that does not take place, the Megilla may only be read on its proper day.

GEMARA: We have learned in a Boraitha: By the ten *Batlonim* are meant those who are always in the house of prayer (and must be supported by the congregation, so that at the prayer should never be less than ten men, as is explained in Tract Berachoth).

"*It may be done sooner, but not later.*" Why so? Said Samuel: Because in the Book of Esther it was said, "shall not trespass."

"*Delivery of wood for the priests, the 9th of Abh,*" etc. The 9th of Abh shall not be made sooner, because calamities are not lamented in advance; and concerning the festive sacrifice and the assembly, it cannot be done earlier, because that duty has not arrived yet. And a Boraitha taught: "The festive sacrifice, and all the time appointed for it (if it was not brought in its right time), can be postponed, but not made earlier." It is right, the festive sacrifice itself; if the festival falls on Sabbath, we postpone it till after Sabbath. But what is meant by "its time shall be postponed"? Said R. Ushia: The Boraitha meant to say thus: The feast-offering, when the festival falls on Sabbath, and the burnt-offering which must be brought when the pilgrims visit Jerusalem [see Deut. xvi. 16, 17], even when the festival did not fall on Sabbath, the offering had to be postponed for the time during the seven days after it. And this is according only to Beth Shammai (Betzah, Chap. II., Mishna 3). Rabha, however, said: What is meant by "the time of the feast-offering may be postponed"? Only for the seven days it can be postponed, not later.

R. Eleazar said in the name of R. Hanina: Rabbi used to set out a plant on Purim, and washed himself in the market of Ziporith (publicly) on the 17th day of Tamuz (which is a fast-day), and intended to abolish the fast of the 9th of Abh. But the sages did not agree with him. Said to him R. Abba bar Zabda: Rabbi, this was not so, for it once happened when the 9th of Abh fell on Sabbath, and it was postponed to Sunday, and Rabbi declared: When it has been postponed, it shall not be kept at all. And the sages did not agree with him. And the former then read the verse [in Ecc. iv. 9]: "Two are better than one." (Rashi explains this, that he means to say the second statement was better than the first; but it seems to us the explanation is different. He means to say that if so, both happened twice, and

Rabbi did not intend to abolish the 9th of Abh, but *did* abolish.)

Hezekiah used to read the Megilla in Tiberia both days—the 14th and the 15th—because it was doubtful to him whether Tiberia had been surrounded with a wall from the time of Joshua b. Nun. But how can this be doubtful? Is it not written [Josh. xix. 35]: “And the fortified cities Ziddim, Zer and Chammath, Rakkath and Kinereth”? And we have a tradition that Rakkath is Tiberia. It was doubtful to him, because on one side the sea was its wall. If so, why is it doubtful? The sea is not a wall, and we have learned in a Boraitha that what is written [Lev. xxv. 30], “the city that has a wall,” means a wall, but not if the houses are built around like a wall—and that excludes Tiberia where the sea is the wall? He was not doubtful in respect to the law about houses in a walled town, but in respect to the Megilla, because the expression in the Megilla is “open towns,” and he doubted whether the city, having the sea as a wall, is called open or not.

R. Asi used to read the Megilla in the city of Hutzl also on both days, because he doubted whether it was surrounded in the time of Joshua with a wall or not. According to others, R. Asi said: This Hutzl, which was in the tribe of Benjamin, I am certain was walled in the time of Joshua b. Nun.

R. Johanan said: When I was a child I said a thing, and afterward the elders were asked, and it was found that I was right; namely, Hammath, that is, Tiberia. And why is it called in the Bible Hammath? Because of the hot springs that are in Tiberia.\* Rakkath is Ziporith, but why is it called in the Bible Rakkath? Because it is situated on the summit of a mountain, as the banks of a river are more elevated than the river.† Kinereth, that is, Genoser; but why is it called Kinereth? Because the fruit of this city is agreeable as the sound of a violin.‡ Said Rabha: Is it possible a man exists who says that Rakkath is not Tiberia? It is known to us that if a great man dies here in Babylon, they in Tiberia, in the funeral oration, say thus: The man was great in Sheshakh (Babylon,—Rashi explains this because Sheshah is, by the alphabet of Athbash, Babel) and his name has reached Rakkath. And if the coffin is brought thither, they say in the funeral oration so: Ye lovers of Israel, inhab-

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\* *Ham* is in Hebrew *hot*.

† *Rakkath* in Aramaic means the bank of a river.

‡ *Kinor* is a violin.

itants of Rakkath, go and receive the man who was killed in the valley of Babylon. And when R. Zera died, in the lamentation was mentioned Rakkath (see *Môed Katan*, p. 44.) Therefore said Rabha : Hammath means Hammei-Grar, Rakkath is Tiberia, Kinereth is Genoser. And why is it called Rakkath ? Because even the common men there are full of religious merits as a pomegranate.\*

R. Jose bar Hanina said : It is written [Zechariah, ix. 7] : " And I will remove their blood out of their mouth, and their abominations from between their teeth ; and their land also shall be left for our God." I will remove their blood out of their mouth,—that means, their *Beth Bamia* ; † " and their abominations from between their teeth "—that is, their *Beth Galia* ; † " and the land also will be left to our God " means, the houses of prayer and of learning which are in Edom (meaning Rome) ; " and it shall be as a prince's dwelling in Judah, and Ekron shall be like Jebusi"—that means the theatres and circuses which were in Edom, but in the future the princes of Judah will teach the Torah publicly in them. R. Itz'hak said : Leshem is Pamiyas, Ekron is Cesaria—why is it called the daughter of Edom ? Because it was the metropolis of kings. Same said because there kings were reared, and according to others because from the inhabitants of that city were made kings. Of Cesaria and Jerusalem—if one will say to thee, Both are destroyed, thou shalt not believe ; if one will say, Both are in their splendor, do not believe ; but if one will say, Cesaria was destroyed and Jerusalem is in its glory, or *vice versa*, you may believe, as it is written [in Ezek. xxvi. 2] : " I shall be made full, now she is in ruins"—that means, if one is full the other is destroyed, and if one is destroyed the other is full. R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak says, we infer it from the following passage [Gen. xxv. 23] : " one people shall be stronger than the other " (Israel and Edom, *i.e.*, Rome). And R. Itz'hak said : It is written [Is. xxvi. 10] : " If favor be shown to the wicked, he will not learn righteousness." Isaac our father said before the Holy One, blessed be He : Creator of the Universe ! let Esau be favored. And He said : " He is wicked." Said Isaac again : " It is because he has not learned righteousness." And the Lord said again : " (It is known before me that even) in the land of

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\* *Rek* is in Hebrew *empty, idle*.

† Places for the worship of idols in Rome.



uprightness he will deal unjustly." Rejoined Isaac: "If it is so, (then) he shall not regard the majesty of the Lord." R. Itz'hak says again: It is written [Ps. cxl. 9]: "Grant not, O Lord, the longings of the wicked: suffer not his wicked device to succeed: lest they exalt themselves. Selah." Said Jacob before the Holy One, blessed be He: Creator of the Universe! do not grant to Esau the wicked longing of his heart; "his wicked device to succeed," meaning Germamia of Edom, for if they would go out they would destroy the whole world. He says again: If one will say to you: I have exerted myself, and not found, do not believe him; if one will say, I have not exerted myself, and have found, do not believe him. But if he will say, I have exerted myself, and have found, then believe him. This is all in the studying of the Law, but in business it is a matter of fortune sent from Heaven. And even in studying the Law you must not believe in his sagacity; but if he says what he has learned he has retained without much trouble, you may believe him, because this can be a help from Heaven. He says again: If you have seen a wicked man on whom fortune smiles, do not provoke him, as it is written [Ps. xxxvii. 7]: "Do not fret thyself because of the evil-doers"; so much the more when in his ways he is successful, as it is written [ibid. x. 5]: "Prosperous are his ways at all times." And not only this, but he always wins in a lawsuit, as it is written [ibid., ibid.]: "Far in the height remain thy punishments from him;" and not this only, but he sees vengeance on his enemies, as it is written [ibid.]: "All his assailants, he puffeth at them." This is not so? Did not R. Johanan say in the name of R. Simeon b. Yochi, that one may provoke the wicked in this world? As it is written [Prov. xxviii. 4]: "They that forsake the law praise the wicked; but such as observe the law contend with them." And we have learned also in a Boraitha: R. Dusthai bar Mathun said: A man may provoke the wicked in this world? [And lest one say: "Do not fret thyself because of the evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers of iniquity," this can be said only about him whose heart trembles. But the interpretation of this passage is thus: "Do not strive to be like the wicked, neither be thou envious to be like the workers of iniquity," as it is written [Prov. xxiii. 17]: "Let not thy heart be envious against sinners."] (Hence we see that the wicked may be provoked?) It presents no difficulty, for if it is in his own interest he shall not do so; but if in heavenly things, he may. And if you like, I can say: Both are



in his own interest; yet when he is a really upright man he may do so, but when he is not really upright he shall not do so. As R. Huna said: It is written [Habakkuk, i. 13]: "Wherefore wilt thou look upon those that deal treacherously; and be silent when the wicked swalloweth up him that is more righteous than he?" From this we may infer that the wicked swallows him who is more righteous than he, but him who is really upright he cannot swallow. And if you wish, I can say: with him whom fortune favors it is different.

MISHNA: If the Megilla had been read in the first Adar, and the year declared (by the Sanhedrin) to be intercalary, it must be again read in the second Adar. There is no difference between the first Adar and second, but in the reading of the Megilla and the gifts to the poor.

GEMARA: The Mishna says that the two Adars do not differ; that is to say, in the order of the portions that must be read from the Bible on the Sabbaths of the four weeks of Adar, the two Adars are equal. According to whom is the Mishna?

Not according to the first Tana, and not according to R. Eliezer b. R. Jose, and not according to R. Simeon b. Gamaliel of the following Boraitha: If they have read only the Megilla in the first Adar, and the year becomes intercalary, it must be read again in the second Adar, because all the duties that are obligatory in the second Adar are so also on the first Adar, except the reading of the Megilla. R. Eliezer b. R. Jose said: It must not be read in the second Adar, because all the duties customary in the second are so also in the first. R. Simeon b. Gamaliel in the name of R. Jose said: It must be read also in the second Adar, because all the duties obligatory in the second must *not* be done in the first. And we asked there, is R. Simeon b. Gamaliel not saying the same as the first Tana? And R. Papa answered: The order of the portions is different between them. Hence our Mishna is not in accordance with the first Tana, because of the gifts to the poor, which according to the Tana of the Boraitha must be given in the first Adar also; and not in accordance with R. Eliezer, who says the Megilla must not be repeated at all in the second Adar; and not in accordance with R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, as according to him there is a difference in the order of the portions (as R. Papa explained). The Mishna is in accordance with R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, but is not completed, and must read thus: There is no difference between the fourteenth day of the first Adar and the fourteenth day of

the second Adar, except in the reading of the Megilla and gifts to the poor. But the next day, in respect to mourning and fasting, they are equal. Concerning the order of the portions, the Mishna does not speak about it. Said R. Hyya bar Abin in the name of R. Johanan: The Halakha prevails according to what Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel said in the name of R. Jose. Said R. Tabi: The reason why R. Simeon b. Gamaliel declares so is, that one redemption (from Haman) should be near to another redemption (from Egypt, Passover). R. Elazar said: The reason of R. Simeon b. Gamaliel is, because it is written in Esther [ix. 29]: "To confirm this letter of Purim the second time." "The second" means in the second Adar.

R. Samuel bar Jehudah said: Esther sent to the sages the request: "Establish me for the later generations." And they answered: "You want to excite the envy of other nations against us." She rejoined: "My history is already written in the chronicle of the kings of Media and Persia." Rabh and R. Hanina, R. Johanan and R. Habiba (see Sukka, page 5), taught: Esther sent to the sages: "Write about me for later generations." And they answered to her: It is written [Prov. xxii. 20]: "Have I not written for thee thrice?" \* (thrice means, three times shall be mentioned in the Torah the war with Amalek—in Exodus, in Deuteronomy, and in I. Samuel): only thrice, and not four times. Finally, they found a passage in the Pentateuch [Ex. xvii. 14]: "Write this for a memorial in the book"; and they interpreted the passage thus: "Write this"—what is written here and in Deuteronomy; "for a memorial"—*i.e.*, what is written in the Prophets (Samuel); "in the book"—*i.e.*, what is written in the Book of Esther. We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Eliezer said: The Book of Esther was dictated by the Holy Spirit, as it is written [Esther, v. 16]: "And Haman said in his heart"; and if it were not by the Holy Spirit, how could we know what he said in his heart? R. Aqiba said: "Esther" was dictated by the Holy Spirit because it is written [ibid. ii. 15]: "And Esther found favor in the eyes of *all* those that beheld her" (this also could not be known, but for the Holy Spirit). R. Meir said: "Esther" was dictated by the Holy Spirit, because it is written [ibid. 22]: "And the thing became known to Mordecai" (and who told him? We must say that it

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\* The expression is *Shalishim*, which the Talmud translates literally, "thrice"—though in Leeser it is different.

was the Holy Spirit). R. Jose b. Durmaskes said: From this passage [ix. 10]: "But to the spoil did they not stretch forth their hands" (and it could not be known what was done in the one hundred and twenty-seven provinces by everyone). Said Samuel: If I had been there, I would have said a thing better than all these sayings: It is written [ibid., ibid. 27]: "The Jews confirmed it as a duty, and took it upon themselves." That means, they confirmed in Heaven what they took upon themselves below. Said Rabha: To all the above sayings I have objections, except to Samuel, to whom it cannot be objected. What R. Eliezer said—that was common sense. Haman knew there was not a man in the king's court that was so respected as he himself, and it is self-evident that thus he thought. What R. Aqiba said—perhaps it was as R. Elazar explains farther on, that every nation thought Esther was of its race; and what R. Meir said—perhaps it was as R. Hyya bar Abbi will explain farther on, that Mordecai understood the language of Righthau and Theres; and what R. Jose b. Durmaskes said—perhaps they may have sent messengers to the king; but to what Samuel said there is no objection. Said Rabbina: That is as people say, it is better to have one pungent pepper-grain than a full basket of cucumbers. R. Joseph said: From this passage [ix. 28]: "And these days of Purim will not pass away" (and how can this be known? Only from the Holy Spirit). And R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak said (from the end of the verse): "Nor will their memorial cease from their seed."

"*Gifts to the poor.*" R. Joseph taught: It is written [ix. 22]: "Sending portions one to another." "Portions" in plural—two portions should be sent to one man; "and gifts to the needy"—needy is in plural: that means, no less than two portions to two men. R. Jehudah the Second\* sent to R. Oshyia a leg of a third-born calf and a pitcher of wine, and the latter sent to him the message: "The Master has confirmed both duties—to send portions one to another; and to give gifts to the needy." Rabha sent to Mari bar Mar through Abayi a bag of dates and a goblet full of flour of dried wheat. Said Abayi to him: Now Mari will say: When a countryman becomes a king, he is still unable to remove the basket from his shoulder. And it is the same with you: now you are the Head of the College, and send

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\* We doubt whether it was the second or the third, as there were also two Oshyias, one in the time of the second and one in the time of the third. See Seder Hadoroth, parag. Oshyia.

to him commonplace articles. R. Mari bar Mar returned to Rabha through Abayi a pouch (*tasca*, Lat.) of ginger and a goblet full of long pepper. Said Abayi: Now the Master will say: I had sent him sweets, and he has sent to me pungent things. Said Abayi again: When I went out from the house of my Master, I was sated. When I arrived there, they furnished the table with sixty diverse dishes, and they ate all; and the last dishes were called "roast of Kedar," and it was so good that I wanted to eat up the dish with it. And this is what people say: "The poor does not know even when he is hungry." Or, as people say: "The stomach is wide enough for sweet things."

Abayi bar Abbin and R. Hanina bar Abbin used to change their meals on Purim. Said Rabha: A man is obliged to intoxicate himself on Purim, till he cannot distinguish between "cursed be Haman" and "blessed be Mordecai." Rabha said again: If one has eaten the festive meal in the night, he has not fulfilled his duty, because it is written, "*days* of entertainment and joy."

R. Ashi was sitting in the presence of R. Kahana. It became dark, and the rabbis had not yet come. Said R. Kahana to him: Why have not the rabbis come yet? And he answered him: Perhaps they are engaged with the festive meal? And he rejoined: Could they not have the festive meal in the evening? Said R. Ashi: Has the Master not heard what Rabha said, that if one has eaten the meal of Purim in the night, he has not fulfilled his duty. And he rejoined: Did Rabha indeed say so? And he answered: Yea. And he learned it from him forty times, and afterward it was as if he had put it into his pocket.

MISHNA: There is no difference between Sabbath and festivals, except in the preparation of food. There is no difference between the Sabbath and the Day of Atonement, excepting that those who knowingly and wilfully profane the Sabbath are punished by man, while those who wilfully profane the Day of Atonement are punished with *Kareth* (by Heaven).

There is no difference between one who by a vow has interdicted himself from receiving a benefit from another man and one whose vow was confined to the interdiction of accepting any food from another, except that it is not lawful for the first to set his foot in the house (or property) of the other and to borrow vessels (of the other) which are not used for the preparation of food. There is no difference between vows and voluntary offer-



ings, except that in the case of the first-mentioned the person who thus vows is liable for the risk, but he is not liable for the last-mentioned.

GEMARA: "*Except in the preparation of food.*" But in the preparations for the preparing of food, they are equal.

"*He is punished with Karoth.*" But in paying of damages, both are equal. And the Mishna is in accordance with R. Nehunia b. Hakana of the following Boraitha: He decided that the Day of Atonement is equal to Sabbath with regard to damages: as on Sabbath, because it is a capital punishment, no damages are to be paid, so on the Day of Atonement, as the punishment is *Karoth*, he is exempt from damages.

"*Vessels which are not used,*" etc. But in regard to vessels which *are* used for the preparation of food, they are equal.

"*He is not liable for the last-mentioned.*" But with regard to the commandment, "Thou shalt not delay," they are equal. (This is explained in Tract Rosh Hashana, page 5.)

MISHNA: There is no difference between a person laboring under an involuntary emission of semen who has experienced it twice (on the same day, or on the two following days) and one who has experienced it thrice (in the same time, or within three days), excepting that the last-mentioned must bring a sacrifice. There is no difference between a leprous person who has only been shut up and one whom the priest has declared as leprous, excepting that the latter must go with rent clothes, and suffer the hair of his head to grow wild. There is no difference between the leper declared clean after being shut up and one who has been cured of that disease, excepting that the latter must be shaved, and bring offerings of birds.

There is no difference between the Holy Books and Thephilin and Mezuzoth, except that the first-mentioned may be written in any language, but the latter in Assyrian characters only. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says: The permission to write the Holy Books in another language was limited to the Greek language only.

There is no difference between a high-priest anointed with the sacred oil and one whose dignity was marked by additional sacerdotal vestments only, except the bull which the first-mentioned is to offer, in case he gave a wrong decision which led to a transgression of a precept. There is no difference between an officiating high-priest and his late substitute, except the bull offered on the Day of Atonement, and the



tenth of the ephah of flour (which the real high-priest alone might offer).

There is no difference between a large high place \* and a small one, except the Paschal offering. This is the rule: All offerings which are brought in consequence of vows, and all peace-offerings, may be offered on a small high place, but not sacrifices of another kind.

There was no difference between the Tabernacle of Shiloh and the Temple of Jerusalem, except that at the former place it was lawful to eat of sacrifices having a minor degree of holiness, and of the second tithe, in any place from whence Shiloh might be seen; but in Jerusalem it was lawful to eat these within the walls only. In both places, however, sacrifices which were most holy might be only eaten within the hangings (of the court of the sanctuary). The holiness of Shiloh had subsequently a period in which it became lawful (to offer sacrifices elsewhere), but the holiness of Jerusalem has no such period.

GEMARA: "*Excepting that the last-mentioned must bring a sacrifice.*" But in respect to their lying, sitting, and the seven days which they have to wait till it is allowed to take a legal bath, both are equal (all this will be explained in Tract Zabim).

"*There is no difference between a leprous person,*" etc. But in regard to sending him away outside of the assembly and in respect to defilement they are both equal (as will be explained in Tract Negaim).

"*There is no difference between the Holy Books,*" etc. But to sew it with dried veins of a clean animal and to make unclean the hand (see Appendix, Sabbath) both are equal.

"*May be written in any language.*" There is a contradiction to the following Boraitha: If one wrote a Targum instead of portions of the Holy Book (in the original); or, *vice versa*, if he wrote the translation in characters of the original, and also if he wrote it not in Assyrian but ancient Hebrew (square) characters, it is not holy to make unclean the hand, until it should be written in Assyrian characters, in a book and with ink (and there it has been said the *Holy Books* can be written in all languages). It presents no difficulty: the Boraitha meant, not Holy Books, but the Thephilin and Mezuzoth, and the Mishna means Scripture. What is the reason that Thephilin and Mezuzoth if written in

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\* High places are the public altars on which they used to sacrifice before the erection of the Temple at Jerusalem. Small places are altars of private persons.

another tongue are not holy? Because it is written [Deut. vi. 8]: "*They shall be as frontlets between thy eyes.*" They shall be as originally.

What is meant, if the Targum was written in the original characters? If in the Torah, it is right. The words "Yegar Sahadutha" [Gen. xxxi. 47] are Aramaic; but what Aramaic words are in the Thephilin? Therefore we must answer the contradiction thus: The Boraitha refers to the Book of Esther. Why must it not be written in other languages? Because it is written [Esther, viii. 9]: "According to their writing, and according to their language." But what Aramaic words are in the Book of Esther? Said R. Papa [in Chapter I., verse 20], "The king's *decree*" (Pithgam), which is not a Hebrew word, but Aramaic. R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak said [ibid., ibid.]: The last word, "will show *respect*" (Yekar), is not Hebrew. R. Ashi, however, said: That the Boraitha means, not the Holy Scrolls (Pentateuch), but the Prophets and Hagiographa. And this is in accordance with R. Jehudah of the following Boraitha: Thephilin and Mezuzoth must be written only in Assyrian characters; and our sages have not allowed they shall be written in any language, only in Greek. And in addition to this Boraitha it is stated: Said R. Jehudah: The sages allowed to write in Greek only the Pentateuch, but not anything else. And this was also allowed only because of what occurred with Ptolemy the king, as follows: It happened to Ptolemy the king that he took seventy-two elders from Jerusalem, and placed them in seventy-two separate chambers, and did not inform them to what purpose he had brought them. And afterward he entered to each of them, and said to them: Translate me the Torah of Moses from memory. And the Holy One, blessed be He, sent into the heart of each of them a counsel, and they all agreed to have one mind, and changed as follows: Instead of "In the beginning God created the world," they wrote, "God created the world in the beginning"; instead of Gen. i. 26 they wrote, "*I* will make a man in an image"; instead of Gen. ii. 2 they wrote, "And God finished on the sixth day, and rested on the seventh day"; instead of Gen. v. 2 they wrote, "created *him*"; instead of Gen. xi. 7 they wrote, "Let *me* go down"; [xviii. 12]: "And Sarah laughed among her relatives"; instead of xlix. 6, "In their anger they slew an ox, and their self-will lamed a fattened ox." And instead of Ex. iv. 20, "Set them on a porter (man-carrier)"; instead of ibid. xii. 40, "Dwelt in Egypt and in *other lands*"; and ibid. xxiv. as ibid.,

“Against the *respectable* men of Israel.” Instead of Num. xvi. 15, “Not one precious thing I took away”; and instead of Deut. iv. 19 they wrote, “assigned to light for all nations”; instead of *ibid.* xvii. 3, “which I have not commanded to worship”; and instead of Lev. xi. 6, “the hare,” which is expressed in the Bible “Arnebeth,” as Ptolemy’s wife was named so they wrote, “and the beast that has small feet.”

“*Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel says,*” etc. Said R. Abahu in the name of R. Johanan: The Halakha prevails according to R. Simeon b. Gamaliel. And he says again: What is the reason of R. Simeon b. Gamaliel? Because it is written [Gen. ix. 27]: “May God enlarge the boundaries of Japheth, and may he dwell in the tents of Shem.” That means to say, the most beautiful thing which Japheth has—that is, the Greek language—shall dwell in the tents of Shem.

“*There is no difference between a high-priest,*” etc. But in respect to the bullock of the Day of Atonement, and the tenth of an ephah, which the high-priest must bring, both are equal.

“*There is no difference between Shiloh and Jerusalem.*” Said R. Itz’hak: I have heard that one may sacrifice in the Temple of Honin in Egypt, even at this time. He holds that the Temple of Honin is not a temple for idolatry, but for God, and also that the sanctitude of Jerusalem was only while the Temple existed, but is not so for the future, since its destruction. As it is written [Deut. xii. 9]: “For ye are not as yet come to the rest and to the inheritance.” “To the rest,” *i.e.*, the Tabernacle of Shiloh; “to the inheritance,” *i.e.*, the Temple of Jerusalem: and we see that the Tabernacle of Shiloh is compared to the Temple of Jerusalem, as Shiloh, after the Tabernacle was destroyed, ceased to be holy, and it was lawful to sacrifice elsewhere, the same was with Jerusalem. The sages then said to R. Itz’hak: Do you say so? And he answered: No. Said Rabha: I swear by God that he has said so, and I have learned it from him. But what is the reason that he himself receded from this? Because R. Mari objected to this, from a Boraitha which states that the sanctitude of Shiloh was gone after the Tabernacle was destroyed, but of Jerusalem the sanctitude was not gone even after the Temple’s destruction.

It is written: “And it came to pass in the days of Ahasuerus.” R. Levi, according to others R. Jonathan, said: This is a tradition among us from our ancestors—the men of the Great Assembly—that wherever it is written יָרַח (it came to pass),

was some disaster. Here there was Haman. In Ruth: "And it came to pass in the days of the judges." There was hunger. Genesis, vi. 1: "And it came to pass when men began to multiply," and soon after is written: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great"; [ibid. xi. 2]: "And it came to pass as they journeyed toward the east." And there was the dispersion. And ibid. xiv. 1: "And it came to pass in the days of Amrophel." There was a war. In Joshua, v. 13: "It came to pass when Joshua was by Jericho," it is written he saw a man with a drawn sword in his hand; ibid. vi. 27: "And the Lord *was* with Joshua" (the Hebrew expression is the same); and soon it is written: "And the children of Israel committed a trespass"; I Samuel: "There *was* a certain man"; and afterward it is written: "Hannah he loved, but the Lord had shut her womb." Ibid. viii. 1: "It came to pass when Samuel was old." His sons walked not in his way. Ibid. xviii. 14: "And David *was* successful in all his ways," and soon comes: "Saul was in dread of him." II Samuel, vii. 1: "And it came to pass when the king dwelt in his house." And he was not allowed to build the Temple. But is it not written [Gen. xxix. 16]: "When Jacob saw Rachel," and in Genesis [i. 5]: "And it was evening, and it was morning, the first day"—and so in many other instances, and no disaster happened? Wherever it is said, "it came to pass," there may or may not be a calamity; but whenever it is said, "and it came to pass in the days," there surely happened a misfortune. There are five expressions, "it came to pass in the days"; viz., in the days of Ahasuerus, the Judges, Amrophel, Ahaz [Is. vii.], and Yoiakim [Jerem. i.], and in all instances there were troubles.

R. Levi says again: We have a tradition from our ancestors that Amuz and Amaziah were brothers. What does he come to teach us? It is similar to what R. Samuel b. Nahmani said in the name of R. Jonathan: A bride who is chaste in the house of her husband's parents deserves that kings and prophets should descend from her, and this we infer from Tamar, as it is written [Gen. xxxviii. 15]: "And Judah saw her and thought her to be a harlot, because she had covered her face." Because she had covered her face he took her for a harlot? That means, she had covered her face when she had been in his house, so that he did not know her. Therefore she was rewarded that from her descended kings and prophets—kings from David; and prophets, as R. Levi said above. Amuz



and Amaziah were brothers, and Isaiah the son of Amuz was a prophet.

R. Jonathan, when he came to lecture about the Book of Esther, began with this passage [Is. xiv. 22]: "I will rise up against them," etc., "and I will cut from Babylon name and remnant, and son and grandson, saith the Lord." Name, *i.e.*, they will not have their own writing; "remnant," they will not have their own language; "son," they will not have any kingdom; "grandchild," that means Vashti.

R. Simeon b. Nahmani, when he came to lecture, began his lecture with the passage [Is. lv. 13]: "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the nettle shall come up the myrtle." "Instead of the thorn," *i.e.*, instead of Haman the wicked, who made himself an idol, as it is written [ibid. vii. 19]. "All thorn-hedges"; "shall come up the fir-tree," *i.e.*, Mor-decai, who was the essence to all the spices, as it is written [Ex. xxx. 23]: "And thou, take unto thyself principal spices, of pure myrrh"—this is translated in the Aramaic Mor-decai; "instead of the nettle," *i.e.*, Vashti the wicked, who was granddaughter of Nebuchadnezzar the wicked, who had burnt the house of God, shall rise Esther the upright, who was called Hadassa (Myrtle), as it is written: "And he had brought up Hadassah—that is, Esther" [Esther, ii. 7]; "And it shall be unto the Lord for a name," *i.e.*, the reading of the Megilla; "for a sign of everlasting that shall not be cut off," *i.e.*, the Days of Purim.

R. Joshua b. Levi began his lecture from this passage [Deut. xxviii. 63]: "And it shall come to pass that as the Lord rejoiced over you to do you good, and to multiply you, so will the Lord rejoice over you to bring you to nought, and to destroy you." Let us see. Does the Holy One, blessed be He, rejoice when the wicked are in misfortune? It is written [II Chron. xx. 21]: "As they went out before the armed array, and said: Give thanks unto the Lord; for unto everlasting endureth his kindness." Said R. Johanan: Why is it not here said, as usually, "for He is good"? Because the Holy One, blessed be He, rejoices not at the misfortunes of the wicked. And R. Johanan said again: It is written [Ex. xiv. 20]: "And the one came not unto the other all the night." That means, the angels of heaven wanted to sing the usual song, and the Holy One, blessed be He, said to them: My creatures are drowning in the sea, and you want to sing songs! Said R. Elazar: He Himself does not rejoice, but He makes others rejoice. And it seems to be



so, because it is not written: "As *he* rejoiced," etc., "so will he rejoice" (others).\*

R. Abba bar Kahana began his lecture with this passage [Ecc. ii. 26]: "For to a man who is good in His presence He giveth wisdom and knowledge and joy"—this means Mordecai the Upright; "but to the sinner he giveth employment to gather up and to bring together"—that means Haman; "that he may give it to him that is good before God," *i.e.*, Mordecai and Esther, as it is written afterward [Esther, viii. 2]: "And Esther appointed Mordecai over the house of Haman."

Rabba bar Upbron began his lecture with the following passage [Jerem. xlix. 38]: "And I will set up my throne in Elam, and I will destroy thence kings and princes." By kings is meant Vashti, and by princes Haman and his ten sons.

And R. Dimi b. Itz'hak begins to lecture from this passage [Ezra, ix. 9]: "For we are bondmen; yet in our bondage hath our God not forsaken us, but hath extended unto us kindness before the kings of Persia." And that was in the time of Mordecai.

R. Hanina bar Papa begins his lecture from this passage [Ps. lxvi. 12]: "Thou hast caused men to ride on our heads: we entered into fire and into water." "Into fire," in the time of Nebuchadnezzar; "into water," in the time of Pharaoh. "But thou broughtest us to the enjoyment of overflowing plenty." That was in the time of Haman.

R. Johanan began his lecture from this passage [Ps. xcvi. 3]: "He hath remembered his kindness and his truth to the house of Israel: all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God." When did all the ends of the earth see it? In the time of Mordecai and Esther.

Resh Lakish began his lecture with this passage [Prov. xxviii. 15]: "As a roaring lion and greedy bear, so is a wicked ruler over an indigent people." "The roaring lion"—that is, Nebuchadnezzar, as it is written [Jeremiah, iv. 7]: "The lion is come up from his thicket." "A greedy bear" is Ahasuerus, about whom it is written [Daniel, vii. 5]: "And behold, there was another, a second beast, like a bear." And R. Joseph said: The Persians are meant, who eat and drink like a bear, and are corpulent like a bear, and let their hair grow like a bear, and

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\* The Hebrew is יִשְׂרֹי, "he will make rejoice." "He will rejoice himself" should have been יִשְׂרֹי.

have no repose, like a bear. "Wicked ruler," *i.e.*, Haman; "indigent people," *i.e.*, Israel, who are poor in merits.

R. Elazar begins his lecture with this passage [Ecc. x. 18]: "Through slothful hands the rafters will sink, and through idleness of the hands the house will become leaky." That means to say, because Israel became idle, and did not observe the Law, the enemy of the Holy One, blessed be He (meaning Him), becomes sunk, *i.e.*, poor.

R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak begins his lecture with this passage [Ps. cxxiv. 2]: "If it had not been the Lord who was for us, when men rose up against us." Men, and not a king (that is Haman).

Rabha begins his lecture with [Prov. xxix. 2]: "When the righteous are in authority, the people will rejoice; but when the wicked beareth rule, the people groan." When the righteous rule, *i.e.*, Mordecai and Esther, the people rejoice, as it is written [Esther, viii. 15]: "And the city of Shushan was glad and joyful." And when the wicked rule, *i.e.*, Haman, the people groan, as it is written [ibid. iv. 15]: "But the city of Shushan was perplexed."

R. Mathna begins with the following passage [Deut. iv. 7]: "For what great nation is there that hath God so nigh unto it?"

R. Ashi begins with the following passage [ibid., ibid. 34]: "Or hath God essayed to go to take to himself a nation from the midst of a nation?" (What they lectured is not written.)

"*And it came to pass in the time of Ahasuerus.*" Said Rabh: Woe! woe! This is what is written [ibid. xxviii. 68]: "And there ye will offer yourselves for sale unto your enemies for bondmen and bondwomen without anyone to buy you." Samuel said: It is written [Lev. xxvi. 44]: "I will not cast them away, neither will I loathe them, to destroy them utterly." I have not cast them away—in the times of the Greek, and I have not loathed them—in the time of Nebuchadnezzar; "to destroy them"—in the time of Haman; "to break my covenant with them"—in the time of the Persians; "for I am the Lord their God"—in the time of Gog and Magog. A Boraitha stated: "I will not cast away"—in the times of the Chaldeans, as in that time I raised for them Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah; and have not loathed men in the times of the Greeks, when I gave them Simeon the Upright and the Maccabees; "to destroy them"—in the time of Haman I gave them Mordecai

and Esther; "to break my covenant"—in the time of Rome I gave them the House of Rabbi and the sages of that generation; "for I am the Lord their God"—in the future no nation or tongue will dominate over them.

R. Levi said: From this verse [Num. xxxiii. 55], and R. Hyya from *ibid.* 56. (What they lectured is unknown.)

"*Ahasuerus.*" Said Rabh: He was the brother of a head\* and the companion of a head. "The brother of a head," *i.e.*, brother of Nebuchadnezzar the wicked, who was called "head," as it is written [Daniel, ii. 38]: "Thou art the head of gold." "And the companion of a head"—what Nebuchadnezzar did, *he* intended to do. Nebuchadnezzar killed, *he* intended; Nebuchadnezzar destroyed, *he* had the intention. As it is written [Ezra, iv.]: "In the beginning of the reign of Ahasuerus, they wrote slanders on the inhabitants of Judea and Jerusalem." Samuel said: Ahasuerus signifies "black," † *i.e.*, in his time the faces of the Jews were black as the bottoms of pots. R. Johanan says: Ahasuerus signifies "woe to his head" (*ah, rosh*); and R. Hanina says it signifies "poor" (*rash*)—his taxes were so heavy that men became poor.

It is written [Esther, i. 1]: "The same Ahasuerus"—he was the same in his wickedness from beginning to end. (Similarly) it is written [in Gen. xxxvi. 43]: "This is Esau," *i.e.*, the same in wickedness from beginning to end; and [Num. xxvi. 9]: "These are Dathan and Abiram," *i.e.*, they were the same in wickedness always; and [II Chron. xxviii. 22]: "He, King Ahaz," *i.e.*, the same in wickedness always; and on the contrary, also [I Chron. i. 27]: "Abram—the same is Abraham," *i.e.*, Abraham was the same in his righteousness from beginning to end; [Ex. vi. 26]: "These are Aaron and Moses," *i.e.*, were the same in righteousness from beginning to end; [I Samuel, xvii. 14]: "And David was the youngest," that means, he was as in his youth from beginning to end: as in his youth he humbled himself before one greater than he, so also when he was a king he was modest before a man superior to him in wisdom.

"*Who reigned.*" Said Rabh: He was a self-made king. Some say, it was in his praise, there was none so fit to be a king as he; and some say it is to his disgrace—he was not fit to be a king, but he had much money, and the money made him king.

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\* *Ah* is brother and *Ras* is head, and it is considered as composed of two words.

† *Sha'hor* is "black."

The rabbis taught: Three kings reigned over the whole world—Ahab, Ahasuerus, and Nebuchadnezzar. Ahab, as it is written [I Kings, xviii. 10]: "As the Lord thy God liveth . . . he caused that kingdom and nation to take an oath . . ."; and if they would not be under his dominion, how could he cause them to take an oath? Nebuchadnezzar, as it is written [Jerem. xxvii. 8]: "And it will come to pass that the nation or kingdom which shall not serve Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, and not place its neck under the yoke of the king of Babylonia." Ahasuerus, as stated in Sanhedrin, was king of the whole world. Are these all? Was not Solomon also king of the whole world? Solomon was not a king to the end of his life.

This is right, according to those who hold he was first a king and then a common man; but according to those who say he was a king, a common man, and then again a king, what can be said? Solomon is different. He reigned over the beings above\* and below, as it is written [I Chron. xxix. 23]: "Solomon sat on the throne of the Lord." (He is not reckoned with them.) But there is Sennacherib? As it is written [Is. xxxvi. 19]: "Which of all the gods of the lands have saved their countries from my hand?" There was Jerusalem, which was not subject to him. But there is Darius? As it is written [Dan. vi. 26]: "Darius the king wrote to all peoples, nations, and tongues that live on the whole earth: Your peace shall be great." There were seven countries not under his dominion; as it is written [ibid. 2]: "It pleased Darius, and he raised over his kingdom 120 satraps" (while Ahasuerus reigned over 127). But there is Cyrus? As it is written [Ezra, i.]: "So said Cyrus, king of Persia: All the kingdoms of the earth the Lord hath given unto me." He only vaunted.

"When the king sat," and, "in the third year of his reign." That is a contradiction? Nay, it is when he became firmly seated on the throne.

R. Na'hman b. Hisda lectured: It is written [Is. xlv. 7]: "Thus hath said the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, 'Whom I have taken hold of by his right hand.'" Was then Cyrus a Messiah? It is meant that God had said to Messiah: I complain of Cyrus; I have thought he would build my House, and gather all my people that were in exile, and he only says [Ezra,

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\* According to Rashi—"the demons."



i. 3]: "Whoever among you that is of all his people, may his God be with him, and let him go up to Jerusalem" [but did not command all to return].

It is written in the first chapter: "The army of Persia and Media"; and [x. 2] "The kings of Media and Persia." Why is Media here mentioned first, and in the other verse Persia? Said Rabha: They made this agreement between them: When one of our nation will be king, the governors will be of your nation, and *vice versa*; [ibid. i. 5]: "And when these days were completed." Rabh and Samuel say, one that he was a wise king, and the other that he was a foolish king. One says he was a wise king, because he made the feast first for the remote subjects, because for his townsmen he could make it at any time; and the other says he was a fool, for he should have made it first for his townsmen, so that if those would rebel, these at least would defend him.

The disciples of R. Simeon b. Yochi asked their Master: By what sins had the Israelites incurred the decree of Haman in that age? Answered he: What is your opinion? They said: Because they enjoyed the feast which Ahasuerus the wicked man made. If so, only those of Shushan should have suffered. Why did those of all provinces? They said to him: Let the Master explain. So he answered: Because they kneeled to the image. Said the disciples to him: If so, they were guilty, and why were they not killed? And he answered: They bowed to the image not because they wanted, but only for appearance; so the decree against them was also for appearance not carried out. And this is what is written [Lam. iii. 33]: "He doth not afflict of his own will."

"In the court of the garden of the king's palace." Rabh and Samuel—one says every one was placed in the place he fitted: the court, garden, and king's palace; and one says he first tried to place them in the court, and it could not contain them; he then placed them in the garden, and it also could not contain them, until he placed them in the king's palace. A Boraitha, however, states that he placed them in the court from which two doors opened, one into the garden and another into the palace.

"And the royal wine was in abundance" [Esther, i. 7]. Said Rabh: We infer from this that he gave to each to drink wine that was older than he.

"And the drinking was according to the order" [ibid. 8]. What is meant by "according to the order"? R. Hanan said



in the name of R. Meir: It was according to the order of our Torah. As in our Law eating precedes drinking, so he gave more to eat than to drink.

“Without compulsion.” Says R. Elazar: From this it can be learned that to each was given to drink wine that grew in his country.

“On the seventh day, when the heart of the king was merry with wine.” And till then, what did he do? Was he not till then merry with wine? Said Rabha: The seventh day was Sabbath. When Israelites eat and drink on Sabbath, they begin with sayings of the Law and praises to God; but the nations, when they feast, speak about women. These said the Medians are beautiful, and those said the Persian women are more fair. And Ahasuerus said to them: The one that I have is neither Median nor Persian, but Chaldean, and she is fairer than they all; and if you wish you can see her. They said: Yea, we wish to see her, but she must be naked. And the same measure which one uses, is used against one: as Vashti used to take Israelite maidens, and make them work nude, on Sabbath, so also it was decreed that she should be brought nude. And this is what is written [Esther, ii. 1]: “After these events, as the king’s fury was appeased, he remembered Vashti, and what she had done, and what had been decreed concerning her”; *i.e.*, the decree had been the same as what she had done. “And the king was very wroth.” What was the cause? Said Rabh: She sent to him this message: Thou groom of my father, my father used to drink wine as a thousand persons, and never had he committed such follies when he was drunk as thou.” And therefore he was so wroth.

“Then said Memuchan.” We have learned in a Boraitha: Memuchan was Haman. Why was he called Memuchan? Because he was *destined*\* for the troubles that befell him afterwards. R. Kahana said: From this we see that usually an ignorant man comes forward first (as he is mentioned last in verse 14).

“That every man should bear rule in his own house.” Said Rabha: But for the first letters, there would have been left no remnant of Israel; because the men laughed at such a decree, that every man should rule in his own house. For even a tanner is in his own house a prince, and therefore they did not pay so much attention to the second decree in the later letters.

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\* *Muchan* in Hebrew is “prepared,” “designed.”

"And let the king appoint officers." Said Rabh: It is written [Prov. xiii. 16]: "Every prudent man acteth with knowledge, but a fool spreadeth abroad his folly." "Every prudent man acteth with knowledge"—that was David, as it is written [I Kings, i. 2]: "Wherefore his servants said unto him, Let them seek out for my lord the king a young virgin." Everyone who had a daughter, brought her himself to the king. "But a fool spreadeth abroad his folly," *i.e.*, Ahasuerus, who had to appoint officers, for whoso had a beautiful daughter hid her from him.

"There was a certain Jew in Shushan the capital . . . a Benjamite." What is meant by "he was a Benjamite"? If it is meant to give his genealogy, let it have been traced to Benjamin; otherwise, why were the first three of his ancestors mentioned? In a Boraitha it is explained that all the three names are not those of his ancestors, but are his own. The son of Yair, *i.e.*, the man who made the eyes of the Jews *light*\* with his prayer; the son of Shimi, the man whose prayer God *heard*;\* the son of Kish, *i.e.*, the man who *knocked* on the gates of *Mercy*, and *they* were opened to him.\* Said R. Na'hman: Mordecai was crowned with these fair names. It is written, "a Judean man," and then, "a Benjamite." Which was he? Said Rabba bar bar Hana in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: His father was a Benjamite and his mother was a Judean. The sages, however, said: The tribes disputed with each other. Judah said: Through me Mordecai was born, for if David had killed Shimi b. Gera, he could not have been born; and Benjamin said, he belongs to me, because he is of my tribe. Rabha says: On the contrary, the Kneseth (congregation) of Israel said: See what Jehudah did to me, and see what the Benjamites have done to me: Judah, because David did not kill Shimi, made possible the birth of Mordecai, of whom Haman became jealous; and because Saul had not killed Agag was born Haman, who caused troubles to Israel.

R. Johanan said: He was a Benjamite. Why is he called a Judean? Because he did not want to worship idols, and every Israelite who rejects idols is called a Judean, as it is written in Daniel x. 12: "There are certain *Judean* men," etc. "Thy gods they do not worship."

R. Simeon b. Pazzi, when he wanted to lecture about Chroni-

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\*Our is "light," *Shema* is "hear," *Kish* is "rap."

cles, began thus: All the names which are mentioned in the Chronicles without any explanation, we are nevertheless able to explain them. It is written [I Chronicles, iv. 18]: "And his wife the Judean bore Jered the father of Gedor, and Cheber the father of Socho, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoach. And there are the sons of Bithya the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Mered had taken (for wife)." Why was she called "the Judean"? Because she denied idolatry, as it is written [Ex. ii. 5]: "And the daughter of Pharaoh went down to wash herself at the river." And R. Johanan said: She went to cleanse herself of the idolatries of her father's house.

"Bore Jered." Did she bear him—she only reared him? From this we may infer that whoso rears an orphan is the same as if she bore him. Jered—that is, Moses. Why is he called Jered? Because in his day manna *descended*\* from heaven to Israel. "Gedor," \* *i.e.*, he fenced up the breaches of Israel. "Cheber," \* *i.e.*, he *joined* the Israelites to their Heavenly Father. "Socho" \*—he was to Israel as a tabernacle (protection). "Jekuthiel"—the Israelites *hoped* to God in his days.† Zanoach," *i.e.*, he *abandoned*† or atoned for the sins of Israel in his days. It is written three times "Abi" (father), *i.e.*, he was the father of Torah, the father of Wisdom, and the father of Prophets. And these are the sons of Bithya the daughter of Pharaoh, whom Meret had taken. Was, then, his name Meret—it is known that his name was Kaleb? The Holy One, blessed be He, said: "Kaleb, who *rebelled*† against the advice of the spies, shall take the daughter of Pharaoh, who had rebelled against the idolatries of her father."

"Who had been carried away into exile from Jerusalem" [ii. 6]. Said Rabha: He had not been exiled, but came by his own will.

"And he had brought up Hadassah." Is she called Hadassah and called Esther? We have learned in a Boraitha, R. Meir said: Her right name was Esther, but she was called Hadassah, because the upright are called thus, as it is written [Zechariah, i. 8]: "He was standing among the *myrtle-trees*."† R. Jehudah said: Her right name was Hadassa. Why was she called Esther? Because she *concealed*† her words, as it is written [ii.

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\* *Jared* is "to descend"; *Geder*, "fence"; *Habor*, "join"; *Sukka*, a "protection."

† *Jekan*, "hopes"; *El*, "God"; *Zanoach*, "abandon"; *Marod*, "rebel"; *Hadas*, "myrtles"; *Haster*, "conceal."

10]: "Esther told nothing." R. Nehemiah said: Her right name was Hadassah. Why was she called Esther? Because the nations called her for her beauty "star" (*αστηρ*). B. Azzai said: Esther was not tall or short, but of moderate size, like a myrtle. R. Joshua b. Kar'ha said: Esther's complexion was yellow, but she had grace.

"For she had neither father nor mother. And when her father and mother were dead, Mordecai had taken her to himself as a daughter." Why this superfluous repetition? Said R. Aha: To tell us that when the mother became pregnant her father died, and when she was born the mother died.

"And the seven maidens who were selected to be given to her" [ibid. 9]. Says Rabha: By them she counted the days to know when Sabbath was.

"In the evening she went and in the morning she returned" [ibid. 14]. Said R. Johanan: Among the blameworthy actions of that wicked man, it can be said in his praise that he had intercourse with women only by night.

"And Esther found favor" [15]. Said R. Elazar: Every nation thought her to belong to itself.

"And the king made a great feast" [ibid. 18]. And Esther still did not tell her nation; he lightened the taxes of all nations, and she did not tell; he sent presents to his governors, and she still did not tell; so he asked the advice of Mordecai how to discover it; and he told him that a woman becomes jealous only of another woman, and when he will take other women she will tell (as a favor to him). But this availed not either, as it is written: "And Esther had not yet told of her descent or her people."

R. Elazar said: It is written [Job, xxxvi. 7]: "He withdraweth not his eyes from the righteous." In reward of the modesty of Rachel, King Saul descended from her; and in reward of Saul's modesty Esther descended from him. Wherein was Rachel modest? It is written [Gen. xxix. 12]: "And Jacob told Rachel that he was her father's brother." Was he her father's brother? He was the son of her father's sister! That means, he asked her: Will you marry me? And she answered: Yes, but my father is a trickster, and he will deceive you. To this he answered: I am his brother in trickery. And she asked him: May an upright man do it? And he answered: Yea, it is written in II Samuel, xxii. 27: "With the pure thou wilt show thyself pure, and with the perverse thou wilt wage a contest." And he asked Rachel: How can he cheat me? And



she replied: I have an elder sister, and he will not let me marry before her. So he confided to her some signs by which to distinguish her. And when Leah was brought in her stead, Rachel said: My sister will be put to shame. So she confided to her the signs. And this is what is written: "And it came to pass that in the morning, Behold, it is Leah." That means, till the morning he knew it not. And therefore she was rewarded by Saul's being descended from her.

And what was Saul's modesty? It is written [II Sam. x. 16]: "Of the matter of the kingdom, whereof Samuel had spoken, he told him not." For this he was rewarded by Esther's being descended from him. R. Elazar said again: When the Holy One, blessed be He, decrees greatness for a man, it is for him and his descendants to the end of ages; as it is written [Job, xxxvi. 7]: "He doth establish them forever, and they are exalted." But if they become proud, he humbles them, as it is written [ibid. 8.]: "If they be bound in fetters."

"In those days, while Mordecai was sitting in the king's gate, Bigthan and Theresh . . . became wroth" [Esther, ii. 21]. Said R. Hyya bar Abba in the name of R. Johanan: The Lord makes the masters wroth against their servants, in order to do good to the upright; as it was in the case of Joseph, as it is written [Gen. xli. 12]: "And there was with us a Hebrew lad," etc. And he makes slaves wroth against their masters, to perform a miracle for the good of the upright. And who is it? Mordecai, as it is written: "And the thing became known to Mordecai." R. Johanan said Bigthan and Theresh were *Tarsees*, and spoke their own language, and said among themselves: "Since Esther has come into the court, we know no sleep. Therefore let us put poison into the king's drink, in order that he should die." And they knew not that Mordecai was of the Great Sanhedrin, every one of whom knew seventy languages. Then Bigthan said to Theresh: Our watches are not the same. He answered: I will watch for you too (and say you are sick). "And the thing was inquired into, and found true." What was found? That he had not been at his post.

"After these events" [ibid. iii. 1]. What events? Said Rabha: After the Holy One, blessed be He, had created a cure to their woe. Because Resh Lakish said: The Holy One, blessed be He, afflicts not Israel before He has prepared the cure for them in advance. As it is written [Hosea, viii.]: "Should I desire to heal Israel, then would the iniquity of



Ephraim be laid open." But with idolatrous nations it is different. First He smites them, then He heals them, as it is written [Is. xix. 12]: "And the Lord will thus strike Egypt, striking and healing."

"But it appeared too contemptible in his eyes to lay his hand on Mordecai alone" [6]. Said Rabha: In the beginning he wanted to lay hand on Mordecai alone, and later on the people of Mordecai, *i.e.*, the scholars, and later on all the Jews.

"Some one cast the Tur, that is the lot" [7]. We have learned in a Boraitha: When the lots fell on the month of Adar, Haman rejoiced very much, for he said: It is the month in which Moses died. But he did not know that on the 7th of Adar Moses had died, and also had been born.

"There is one people" [ibid. 8]. Said Rabha: There was no man who could calumniate so well as Haman. He said to the king: Let them be destroyed. And he answered: I am afraid of their God, lest he act toward me as toward others that did evil to Israel. Then Haman replied: They no longer observe their God's commandments. Then the king said: But there are among them rabbis, who observe them. Then he rejoined: They are one people, all are the same, no one observes. And if thou shouldst think I shall leave a void in thy kingdom, thou must know that they are scattered among all nations, and their extermination will not be perceptible. And perhaps thou wilt say, thou derivest a benefit from them. Know that they are like mules,\* that are unproductive. And if thou shouldst imagine there is one country in which they dwell together, know that they are scattered in *all* the provinces of thy kingdom.

"And their laws are different from those of every people," *i.e.*, they do not eat with us, and do not intermarry with us.

"They do not execute the laws of the king." The whole year they find excuses not to give the taxes, saying: Now is Sabbath, now is Passover.

"It is no profit for the king to tolerate them." Because they eat and drink in a manner to disgrace the king, for if a fly fall into a goblet of wine, they will take it out and drink it; but if the king should touch the goblet of wine, they will pour it out.

"If it be pleasing to the king, let it be written to destroy them, and ten thousand talents of silver will I weigh out." Said

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\* "Separated," מפורד; and פרר is "a mule."

Resh Lakish: It was known to Him who said one word, and the world was created, that in the future Haman would give talents of silver to buy Israel. Therefore He had commanded that in the same month they should give Shekalim of silver to the Lord, as we have learned in a Mishna that on the first day of Adar it was heralded that the Shekalim be given. And the king said to Haman: The silver is given to thee; that people also, to do therewith as it seemeth good in thy eyes.

Said R. Abba: The parable of Ahasuerus and Haman resembles what? Two men, one of whom had a hillock in his field and the other a valley (or pit); he who had the valley, when he saw the hillock, said: If one would sell it to me, I would buy it to fill up the valley. Then it happened they met, and he who had the valley said: Sell me the hill. And he answered: Take it for nothing, so that you remove it. (So Ahasuerus also had wanted to get rid of the Israelites, and when Haman came to him he gave them away for nothing.)

"And the king drew his signet ring from off his hand." Said R. Abba bar Kahana: The removal of this ring had a greater effect than forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses, who preached that Israel should better its ways; but this made them really better.

The rabbis taught: Forty-eight prophets and seven prophetesses preached to Israel, and subtracted or added nothing, save the reading of the Megilla, which was instituted by the prophets alone. What basis had they for that? Said R. Hyya bar Abbin in the name of R. Joshua b. Kar'ha: They drew an *a fortiori* conclusion: if when Israel was delivered from slavery to freedom they sang, so much the more when they were saved from death to life. Why, then, do we not say Hallel on Purim? Because we do not say Hallel for the miracles that happened outside of Palestine. But the exodus from Egypt was also a miracle outside of Palestine? This is in accordance with the teaching of the following Boraitha: Till Israel entered Canaan, they said praises for all miracles, but since they occupied Palestine they sang praise only for miracles in Palestine. R. Na'hman, however, said: The reading of the Megilla, that is the same as Hallel. Rabha said: There, when they went out of Egypt, it was right to say Hallel, because it is said: "Praise, O ye servants of the Lord," and not Pharaoh's; but now, how could they say so on Purim, since they continued to be slaves of Ahasuerus?

Who were the seven prophetesses? Sarah, Miriam, Deborah, Hannah, Abigail, Huldah, Esther.

Sarah, as it is written [Gen. xi. 29]: "The father of Milcah and the father of Yiscah." And R. Itz'hak said: By Yiscah is meant Sarah. Why was she called Yiscah? Because that signifies *seeing*, and she was a *seer* through the Holy Spirit. Miriam, as it is written [Ex. xv. 26]: "Then took Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron." Aaron's, and not Moses' sister? Said R. Na'hman in the name of Rabh: She had prophesied even when she had been yet but Aaron's sister, before Moses' birth, and she said: In the future my mother will give birth to a child that will deliver the Israelites. Finally, when Moses was born, the whole house was filled with light. And her father rose, and kissed her on her head, and said: Daughter, thy prophecy is fulfilled. Afterward, when he was cast into the river, the father asked: Daughter, what has become of thy prophecy? And this is what is written [ibid. ii. 4]: "And his sister placed herself afar off, to ascertain what would be done to him," *i.e.*, to know what would be the end of her prophecy.

Deborah, as it is written [Judges, ix. 4]: "And Deborah, a prophetess."

Hannah, as it is written [I Sam. ii. 1]: "And Hannah prayed and said, My heart is glad in the Lord, my horn is exalted through the Lord." My *horn* is exalted, and not my *flask*. David and Solomon, who were anointed with the horn, their dynasty endured; but Saul and Jehu, who were anointed with a flask, their dynasties did not last.

"There is none holy like the Lord, for there is none beside thee" [ibid. 2]. The expression for "none beside thee" is בלתיך. Said R. Jehudah b. Menassia: 'Do not read בלתיך, but לבלותיך, because not as a human being is the Holy One, blessed be He: a human being is survived by his own work, but God survives all His works.\*

"There is not any rock like our God," *i.e.*, there is no sculptor like our God. Do not read צור (rock), but צייר: † a man makes a statue, and cannot endow it with a soul; but the Holy One, blessed be He, makes an image within an image, and endows it with a soul and life, entrails, etc.

\* בלה is "to rot, fade, dwindle, wear out."

† Which means "painter, sculptor."

Abigail, as it is written [I Sam. xxv. 31]: "And when the Lord will do good unto my lord." She prophesied that he would be king.

Huldah, as it is said [II Kings, xxii. 14]: "Huldah the prophetess."

And Esther, because it is written [Esther, v. 7]: "Esther put on royalty."\* It should be written, "royal apparel"? That means, she clothed herself in the Holy Spirit, and this is inferred from an analogy of expression; here it is written, "she put on," and in I Chron. xii. 18, "a spirit invested † Amassoï." As there the Holy Spirit is meant, so here.

Said R. Na'hman: Pride does not become women. Two women were proud, and they both had unlovely names: one was called Bee (Deborah) and one Cat (Huldah). Of Deborah it is written [Judges, iv. 6]: "And she sent and called Barak and went not herself"; and of Huldah it is said [II Kings, xxii. 15]: "Say unto the man that hath sent you to me"; and she did not say, "unto the king."

"And Mordecai ascertained all that had been done" [Esther, iv. 1]. What had been done? Said Rabh: That Haman had persuaded Ahasuerus.

"Then called Esther for Hathach" [5]. Said Rabh: Hathach is Daniel. Why was he called Hathach? Because he was *cut* from, or deprived of, his office.‡ Samuel says: On the contrary, he had the office, but he was called Hathach because all laws were *decided*§ by him.

"And they told Mordecai the words of Esther" [12]. But he went not himself to her? From this is inferred that an evil tidings must not be brought personally.

"And Mordecai went about" [17]. Said Rabh: What is meant by "went about"? He transgressed ¶ by fasting on the first day of Passover; he fasted three days, and the third was Pesach. And Samuel says: It means "be passed." There was a piece of water between the court and Shushan, and he crossed it.

"And it came to pass on the third day that Esther put on royalty" [iv. 1]. Said R. Elazar in the name of R. Hanina: From this we infer that she clothed herself in the Holy Spirit, as explained above [66].

The same says again: The blessing of a common man shall

\* In Hebrew it is so. † In Hebrew it is the same expression. ‡ *Hathach*, "cut."

§ Which is in Hebrew expressed by *cutting*. ¶ *Abor* has all these meanings.



never be held light, because we find that two who were the greatest in their generations were blessed by two common men, and the blessings have been fulfilled, and they are David and Daniel. David, whom Araunah blessed, as it is written [II Samuel, xxiv. 23]: "And Araunah said unto the king, may the Lord thy God receive thee favorably." And Daniel, whom Darius blessed, as it is written [Dan. vi. 17]: "May thy God, whom thou worshippest, continually, truly deliver thee." The same authority says again: Do not hold light the curse of a common man. For Abimelech cursed Sarah, saying [Gen. xx. 16]: "This is to thee a covering to the eyes," and it happened to her children as is written: "And Isaac's eyes became dim" [Gen. xxvii. 1]. The same says again: He who repeats something said by another, in that person's name, brings salvation to the world, as it is written: "And Esther said it to the queen in the name of Mordecai." And thus Israel was saved. He says again: When an upright man is lost, he is lost to his generation; but not he himself. He is like to a pearl, which may be lost to the owner, but is and remains a pearl.

"Yet all this profiteth me nothing" [v. 13]. Said R. Elazar in the name of R. Hanina: That was because Mordecai once had a *πρεσβευταί*, and Haman had sold himself to him as a slave, as said R. Hisda. The same said again: In the future, the Holy One, blessed be He, will be Himself a crown on the head of every upright man, as it is written [Is. xxviii. 5]: "On that day will the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty." What is meant by "a crown of glory and a diadem of beauty"? It is to those who do His will, and hope for His glory. But shall we assume, to all of them? Therefore it is written: "Unto the residue of his people." That means, to those who are so modest that they consider themselves like the remnant of the people.

"And for a spirit of judgment" [ibid. 6]. To those who judge their own resolutions. "To him that sitteth in judgment." It is the judge who does justice. "And for strength." It is to those who conquer their own desires. "To those that drive back the battle." That means, the disputing about the Law. "To the gate." That means, the scholars who come to the gate of the houses of prayer and learning in the morning and the evening. The Severity of Justice said to the Holy One, blessed be He: Creator of the world, what is the difference between the Israelites and other nations? And He answered:



Israel studied the Torah, and the idolaters did not. To this Justice replied [ibid. 7]: "But these also are now stumbling through wine, and reeling through strong drink."

"And placed herself in the inner court of the king's house" [Esther, v. 1]. Said R. Levi, as she came to the house of idols, the Shekhina left her; so she began to say [Ps. xxii. 2]: "'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' Canst thou hold guilty one who does a thing unintentionally as if she did it intentionally, and what she is forced to do as if she did it voluntarily?"

"And it happened when the king saw Esther the queen" [2]. Said R. Johanan: Three angels came to her help at the same time: one angel raised her head, that the king might see her; one, who gave her grace; and one who made longer the sceptre which the king stretched out to her. How much did it become longer? Says R. Jeremiah: It was two ells long, and became twelve ells long. And others say sixteen, and others say twenty-four; and in a Boraitha we have learned sixty. Rabba bar Uphran said in the name of R. Eliezer, who had heard it from his Master, and his Master from *his* Master: It became longer two hundred ells.

"Let the king and Haman come this day unto the banquet" [v. 5]. The rabbis taught: Why did Esther invite Haman to the feast? R. Elazar says: She spread for him a net, as it is written [Ps. lxix. 23]: "May their table become a snare before them." R. Joshua says: She learned it in her father's house, as it is written [Prov. xxv. 21]: "If thy enemy be hungry, give him bread." R. Meir said that at the time when Ahasuerus would be at the feast, Haman should not get wind of the matter, and rebel. R. Jehudah said: She did it that it should not be noticed she was a Jewess. R. Nehemiah said: That the Israelites say not, We have a sister in the king's court. Therefore we need not pray to God. And R. Jose said: He should be near, if she wanted him. R. Simeon b. Menassia said: That He above should see that she was so humbled as to be forced to flatter her enemy, and should perform a miracle. R. Joshua b. Korba said: She meant to make herself agreeable to Haman, that the king might become jealous, and should kill both him and her, whereby Israel would be saved. R. Gamaliel said: Because she knew Ahasuerus was very fickle (and if she told him to kill Haman, he might repent; but if he should be in her house, it would be executed immediately). Said R. Gamaliel:

After all, we must still hear what the Median has said. As we learn in the following Boraitha, R. Elazar of Media said: She had intended to make Haman jealous of Ahasuerus, and Ahasuerus jealous of Haman. Rabha said: As it is written [in Prov. xvi. 18]: "Before downfall goeth pride." Abayi and Rabha both said: She intended to do as is written [in Jeremiah, li. 39]: "When they are heated I will prepare their drinking feasts and will make them drunken." Rabba bar Abahu once found Elijah the prophet, and asked him: What did Esther intend to do? And he answered: As all the Tanaim and all the Amoraim opined.

"In that night sleep fled from the king" [vi.]. He thought, What could be the meaning of Esther's invitation of Haman? Perhaps they conspired against him to kill him? Then he considered that some friend of his would be found to inform him. But then he said: Perhaps there are men who have rendered me services, and I have not rewarded them. Therefore people do not care to do me a kindness. As soon as this struck him, he commanded to bring to him the Chronicles. "And they were read" by themselves; *i.e.*, that place in the Chronicles turned up accidentally.

Said R. Ashi: R. Shila of the village Tamratha lectured: If what is recorded about Israelites below is not erased, so much the more what is written about them in Heaven above.

"There hath nothing been done with him" [3]. Says Rabha: They said so, not because they loved Mordecai, but because they hated Haman.

"Do this to Mordecai" [10]. And Haman asked: Who is Mordecai? And the king answered: The Jew. And he said again: There are many Jews by the name of Mordecai. And he answered: The one that sits at the gate of the king. He said: For this man it will suffice if thou wilt give him a village, or the tolls of a river. And the king said: Give him this too. Therefore it is written: "Leave out nothing of all that thou hast spoken." "And Haman then took the apparel and the horse" [11]. As Mordecai saw that Haman came to him on the royal horse, he trembled, and said to the rabbis who sat near him: This man probably comes with an order to put me to death. Go away from here, that you may not get harmed through me. Mordecai wrapped himself, and stood up to pray. When Haman entered, he sat down and waited till Mordecai ended the prayer. Then Haman asked Mordecai: What was

your occupation when I entered? He replied: We studied the laws of a handful [Lev. vi. 8]. We deliberated what a handful should be. Haman answered: Your handful, which you have offered to God, has outweighed the ten thousand talents that I had proposed to the king, for your destruction. Then said he to him: Put on the royal apparel and mount the horse, for the king wants you. Mordecai said: I must not put on the royal garments before I wash myself. Haman took him himself to the bath, and washed him, and cut his hair. Thereafter, he bade him mount the horse. He replied: I cannot; I am too weak from fasting. So Haman bent himself, and helped him to climb the horse, by letting him step on his back.

"And proclaimed before him: Thus shall be done unto the man," etc. [11]. Haman's daughter heard this, and saw from a distance a man riding on a horse. She thought her father sat on the horse, and Mordecai led him. When they came nearer, and she perceived her mistake, she threw herself from the balcony, and died. And this is what is written: "Haman hastened to his house, mourning, and having his head covered"—mourning over his daughter, and his head covered, because of the disgrace.

"And Haman related to Zeres his wife and to all his friends" [13]. And afterward it is written: "Then said unto him his wise men and Zeres his wife." First they are called friends, and then wise men? Said R. Johanan: A man even of the nations who says an intelligent thing may be called wise.

"If Mordecai be of the seed of the Judeans." They said: If Mordecai is descended from other tribes, you will get the better of him; but if he be descended from one of these tribes—Jehudah, Benjamin, Ephraim, Menasseh, then you cannot overcome him. From Jehudah because it is written [Gen. xlix. 8]: "Thy hand shall be on the neck of thy enemies"; and the other three, because it is written [Ps. lxxx. 3]: "Before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Menasseh, awaken thy might."

"But thou wilt surely fall before him." R. Jehudah b. Ilai lectured: What is meant by "surely fall"? His wise men and wife said to him thus: This nation [Israel] resembles earth, and resembles stars; when they sink they sink to the dust, and when they rise they rise to the stars.

"When the king's chamberlains arrived" [Esther, vi. 14]; "and they hastened." From this we infer that they brought him in a hurry.

"For we have been sold, I and my people . . . for the adversary regardeth not the damage of the king." She said to him: This enemy is not worth the damage he causes to the king: when he became jealous of Vashti, he killed her; and now he becomes jealous of me, and wants to kill me too.

"And the king arose in his fury . . . and when the king returned" [vii. 7, 8]. From this we may infer that as he had gone out in fury, so he returned in fury. "Haman was fallen upon the couch." It is not written "fell," but "was fallen," from which we may infer that an angel came and pushed him. And the king said: Woe inside, and woe outside!

"Then said Harbanah" [9]. Said R. Elazar: Harbanah the wicked had been among those who had given the advice to make a gallows for Mordecai; but as he saw his plan not fulfilled, he deserted Haman and went over to Mordecai's friends, and this is written [Job, xxvii. 22]: "And will cast upon him, and have no pity; out of his hand will surely escape."

"And the fury of the king was appeased" [xii. 10]. The expression is שַׁכָּחָה, which is plural. (What signifies the plural? His anger about Vashti and about Esther was appeased.)

It is written [Gen. xlv. 22]: "To all of them he gave to each changes of raiment; but to Benjamin he gave . . . five changes of raiment." Is it possible that what gave trouble to Joseph's father, as Rabba bar Me'hassia said in the name of Rabh (Sabbath, p. 19), *he* (Joseph), the righteous man, should do? Said R. Benjamin b. Jepheth: That was a hint that from him would descend a man who would wear five royal garments, as it is written [Esther, viii. 15]: "And Mordecai went out in a royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a cloak of fine linen and purple."

"And he fell upon his brother Benjamin's neck\* . . ." [Gen. xlv. 14]. How many necks had he—he had only one? He wept for the two Temples, that would be situated in Benjamin's land, and would be destroyed. "And Benjamin wept upon his neck." He wept for the Tabernacle of Shiloh, that would be in Joseph's part of the land, and would be destroyed. "And behold, your own eyes see, and the eyes of my brother Benjamin" [Gen. xlv. 12]. Said R. Elazar: Joseph said to them: Just as I have nothing in my heart against Benjamin, who took

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\* In the Hebrew text the plural is used.



no part in my sale, so I have nothing against you. "It is my mouth that speaketh unto you." What I speak with my mouth, I think in my heart. "And to his father he sent after this manner [ibid. 23] . . . with the best things of Egypt." What is meant by the best things of Egypt? Said R. Benjamin b. Jepheth in the name of R. Elazar: He sent him old wine, which when old men drink they have their minds invigorated. "And Israel bowed himself upon the head of the bed" [xxxvii. 31]. The same authority said: When the fox is at the head, the people bow to him. "And he comforted them, and spoke kindly unto them" [l. 21]. Said the same authority again: He told them such things as are agreeable to be heard; namely, ten lights could not extinguish one, much less could one light put out ten.

"For the Jews there was light, and joy and gladness and honor" [Esther, viii. 16]. Said R. Jehudah: By light is meant the Law, as it is written [Prov. vi. 23]: "For the commandment is a lamp, and the law is light." "Joy," that is, a holiday, as it is written [Deut. xvi. 14]: "And thou shalt rejoice on thy feast." "Gladness" means circumcision, as it is written [Ps. cxix. 162]: "I am rejoiced over thy promise." And by "honor" is meant Thephilin, as it is written [Deut. xxviii. 16]: "And all the nations of the earth shall see that thou art called by the name of the Lord, and they shall be afraid of thee." And we have learned in a Boraitha, R. Eliezer the Great said: By this are meant the Thephilin on the head.

"And Parshandatha" [Esther, ix. 7]. R. Adda, from the city of Jopha, said: The names of the sons of Haman and the phrase "and the ten" must be pronounced in one breath. Why? Because their souls left their bodies all at the same time. Said R. Johanan: The Vav of Vayzatha must be made longer, that it look like a gallows, for all ten were hanged on one gallows-tree.

"Words of peace and truth" [30]. Said R. Tanhum, and according to others R. Ashi: We may infer from this that it should be written like the Law of Truth; as that must be written on ruled parchment, so this.

"And the order of Esther confirmed" [32]. Said R. Johanan: Read together the former verse and this: "The matters of the fastings, the prayers, and the order of Esther confirmed."

"For Mordecai the Jew was the second in rank after King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and acceptable to the



multitude of his brethren" [x. 3]. To the multitude, but not to all? From this we may infer that a part of the Sanhedrin turned away from him.

R. Joseph said: The study of the Law is greater than the saving of lives, for before Mordecai was mentioned the fifth, and later the sixth. It is written [Ezra, ii. 2]: "Who came with Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Serayah, Realayah, Mordecai, Balshan;" and later, [in Nehemiah, vii. 7] he is mentioned the sixth. (Rashi explains this thus: From the return of Ezra to the return of Nehemiah twenty years elapsed, and meanwhile Mordecai became of high rank, but before he had been more of a scholar.)

Rabh, and according to others R. Samuel b. Martha, said: The study of the Law is of more importance than the building of the Temple; for so long as Barach b. Neriah lived, Ezra returned not to the land of Israel. Said Rabha in the name of R. Itz'hak b. Samuel the son of Martha: The study of the Law is more important than the honoring of the parents; for in all the years that Jacob passed with Shem and Eber and studied the Law, he was not chastised for failing during that time to honor his father and his mother.\*

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\* The Gemara proceeds to prove this by certain calculations of the ages of Ishmael, Itz'hak, and Jacob, deduced from scriptural passages; the proof being very flimsy and complicated, we have omitted it.

## CHAPTER II.

CONCERNING THE READING OF THE MEGILLA—BY WHOM, WHERE,  
AND IN WHAT LANGUAGES.

MISHNA: Anyone who reads the Megilla in an irregular manner does not fulfil his duty; nor if he reads it by heart, or translated in any language which he does not understand. It is lawful, however, to read to those that know no Hebrew in a foreign language which they understand; if they have heard it in (the original language with) Assyrian characters, they have also done their duty (though they have not understood the Hebrew). Should anyone read it so as to make long pauses between the parts and slumber meanwhile, he will have fulfilled his duty. If anyone should read the Megilla while writing, expounding, or correcting it, with the intention of fulfilling his duty, it is fulfilled; but not, if he had no such intention. If the Megilla was written with paint, ruddle, gum, vitriol black, on papyrus, or on rough vellum, the duty is not fulfilled, but it must be written in Assyrian characters, in a book, on good parchment, and with ink.

GEMARA: Whence do we deduce this? Said Rabha: It is written [Esther, ix. 28]: "And these days are remembered and celebrated." The remembering is compared to the celebrating, as the celebration cannot be earlier, because the 15th day cannot precede the 14th; so in remembering, the second chapter cannot be read before the first. We have learned in a Tosephtha that the same is the case with the Hallel Prayer, and the saying of Shema. And whence is this deduced? Said Rabba: Because it is written [Ps. cxiii. 3]: "From the rising of the sun unto his going down, the name of the Lord is praised" (as the sun does not go backward, so the praises of the Lord). R. Joseph said: From the following passage [Ps. cxviii. 24]: "This is the day which the Lord has made" (as the day progresses without irregularity, so is to be the prayer). R. Ivia says: From the following passage [ibid. cxiii. 2]: "*Let* the name of the Lord be blessed" (*let* it be as it is). And R. Na'hman

bar Itz'hak, and according to others R. A'ha bar Jacob, says: From [ibid. 2]: "From this time forth and for evermore" (as time progresses regularly, so should the prayer be).

The rabbis taught: Whence do we deduce that we should mention the Patriarchs in the prayer? Because it is written [Ps. xxix. 1]: "Ascribe unto the Lord, ye sons of the mighty" (by mighty are meant the Patriarchs). And whence do we deduce that we should mention in the prayer the power of God? Because it is written [ibid.]: "Ascribe unto the Lord glory and *strength*." And whence do we deduce that His Holiness must be mentioned? Because it is written [ibid. 2]: "Ascribe unto the Lord the glory of his name; bow down to the Lord in the beauty of *holiness*." And from what did they see that we should pray for Wisdom after Holiness is mentioned? Because it is written [Is. xxix. 23]: "Then will they sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and the God of Israel will they reverence"; and in the succeeding verse: "They also that were erring in spirit shall acquire understanding." And why do we mention Repentance after Wisdom? Because it is written [Is. vi. 10]: "Lest his heart understand, and he will repent, and be healed." If so, we ought to mention Healing after Repentance? It would not be proper, because it is written [ibid. lv. 7]: "And let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and unto our God, for he will abundantly pardon." Pardon is therefore prayed for after Repentance. But why is preference given to this verse over that verse? There is another passage [Ps. ciii. 3]: "Who forgiveth all thy iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth from the pit thy life." Shall we assume that Redemption and Healing come after Forgiveness—in the verse above quoted it is written, "he will repent and be healed"? Not healing from disease is meant, but the forgiveness is a healing. And why did they mention Redemption in the seventh Benediction? Said Rabha: Because it is known they will be redeemed in the seventh year (in Sanhedrin it is said that in the last of the seven years before Messiah they will be redeemed). And why do they pray for Healing in the eighth Benediction? Said R. A'ha, because circumcision takes place on the eighth day, and requires a healing. And why do they pray for the Blessing of the Year in the ninth Benediction? Said R. Alexandri: That is for those who raise the prices, as it is written [Ps. x. 15]: "Break thou the arm of the wicked and of the bad man." And this the ninth psalm. (This whole psalm, Rashi

explains, speaks only of people buying up grain to raise its price, and he infers it from the verse: "He lieth in wait to snatch up the poor; he snatcheth up the poor as he draweth him into his net." And why is it considered the ninth psalm? Because they consider the first two psalms as one.) And why do we pray for Return from the Exile after the Benediction of the Year? Because it is written [Ezek. xxxvi. 8]: "But ye, O mountains of Israel, ye shall send forth your boughs, and your fruit shall ye bear for my people Israel; for they are near at hand to come." And as soon as there will be a Return from Exile, there will be the Punishment of the Wicked, as is written [Is. i. 25]: "I will turn my hand against thee, and purge away as with lye thy dross." And further [26]: "I will restore thy judges as at the first, and thy counsellors as at the beginning." After the Judgment of the Wicked there shall be no sinners, as is written [28]: "But destruction shall come over transgressors and sinners together." And those that forsake the Lord shall perish, and when sinners cease to exist, the horn of the righteous is exalted; as it is written [Ps. lxxv. 11]: "And all the horns of the wicked will I hew off, but the horns of the righteous shall be exalted." And righteous proselytes are included among them, as it is written [Lev. xix. 32]: "Before the hoary head shalt thou rise up, and honor the old man." And soon after: "If a stranger sojourn with thee, ye shall not vex him." And where will be exalted their horn? In Jerusalem. As it is written [Ps. cxxii. 6]: "Pray ye for the peace of Jerusalem: may those that love ye prosper." When Jerusalem will be rebuilt, David will come, as it is written [Hosea, iii. 5]: "After that will the children of Israel return and seek for the Lord their God and David their king." And with David will come Prayer, as it is written [Isaiah, lvi. 7]: "Even these will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer." And with Prayer comes Service in the Temple, as it is written further: "Their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon my altar." And after service comes a thanksgiving offering, as it is written [Ps. l. 23]: "Whoso offereth thanksgiving glorifieth me." (The order of the separate parts of the Eighteen Benedictions has already been laid down.) And why do they say the Blessing of the Priests after Thanksgiving? Because it is written [Lev. ix. 22]: "And Aaron lifted up his hands toward the people, and blessed them, and came down after he had offered the sin-offering and burnt-offering and peace-offer-

ing." And perhaps he blessed them *before* the service? Nay, we do not suppose so; for it is written, "he came down *after* he had offered"—not "to offer," but *after* offering. If so, let it be said before the Thanksgiving? It would not be proper, because it is written: "Whoso offereth the thanksgiving glorifieth me." And why is this verse preferred to that? Because common sense tells that Service and Thanksgiving are the same thing. And why do we pray for Peace after the Blessing of Priests? Because it is written [Num. vi. 27]: "And they shall put my name upon the children of Israel, and I will bless them." And the blessing of the Holy One, blessed be He, is Peace, as it is written [Ps. xxix. 11]: "The Lord will bless his people with peace."

(Let us see:) If one hundred and twenty elders, and among them many prophets, have arranged the Eighteen Benedictions, why have we learned in another place that Simeon of Peculi had ordered them? They had been forgotten, so he reintroduced the order.

After these Eighteen Benedictions, it is not permitted to bless the name of the Lord more, as R. Elazar said: It is written [Ps. cvi. 2]: "Who can utter the mighty acts of the Lord? Who can publish all his praise?" *i.e.*, who is fit to utter? He who can publish *all* his praise (and as no one can do it, only the prayers that have been ordained should be said).

Rabba bar bar Hana said in the name of R. Johanan: He who speaks too much in praise of God is uprooted from the world, as it is written [Job, xxxvii. 20]: "Can all be related of him when I speak? Or if a man talk even till he be swallowed up?" R. Jehudah of the village Geborlah, according to others of Gibor-Hail, lectured: It is written [Ps. lxxv. 2]: "For thee praise is silent."\* Silence is the cure to everything: when R. Dima came from Palestine, he said that in the West they say: "A word is worth a *sela*, and silence two."

"*If he reads it by heart.*" Whence is this deduced? Said Rabba: There is an analogy of expression in the word "memorial." Here it is written [Esther, ix. 28]: "These days are remembered"; and there [Ex. xvii. 14]: "Write this for a memorial in a book." As there it is written "in a book" so here it should be read out of a book. How is it known that loud reading is meant—perhaps only looking through the book?

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\* So the Talmud translates דומיה.



It would not be reasonable; as a Boraitha states: It is written [Deut. xxv. 17]: "Remember"; and it cannot mean "in thy heart," because it is written again [ibid. 19]: "Thou shalt not forget." That means, certainly, in thy heart. Consequently "remember" must mean orally.

"*Or translated*," etc., *i.e.*, when both the language and the characters are foreign.

"*To those who know no Hebrew*," etc. But it is just stated that by hearing it read in a foreign language one has not fulfilled his duty. Rabbi and Samuel both said: By this Greek is meant. How is the case? If it was written in Assyrian (characters), and one read it in Greek, then he reads it by heart? Said R. A'ba in the name of R. Elazar: That means, when it is written in Greek, and he reads it in Greek.

The same authority says again: How is it known that God called Jacob "El" (one of the names of God)? Because it is written [Gen. xxx. 20]: "And called it El, the God of Israel," which he interprets, "who called him El, the God of Israel." For if the altar was meant, the verse would say, "and Jacob called *it*." An objection was raised: If one read the Megilla in Coptic, in Old Hebrew, Elamic, Median, or Greek, one has not fulfilled his duty? What is said above, that Greek is lawful, is like another Boraitha which says that if one has read in Coptic to Coptic, Hebrew to Hebrews, Elamic to Elamite, or Greek to Greek Israelites, they have done their duty. If so, why do Rabh and Samuel say the Mishna means only Greek: let them say it means all foreign languages may be read to those who understand them? Rabh and Samuel mean that even to those who do not comprehend it, it may be read in Greek. But in the Boraitha it is said, that only if Greek is read to Greek Israelites it is lawful? Rabh and Samuel are in accordance with Rabban Simeon Gamaliel, who says that even the Pentateuch was allowed to be written only in Greek, not in another tongue. If so, let them say, more briefly, the Halakha prevails according to R. Simeon b. Gamaliel? If they said so, we would think it bears reference only to other books; but as of the Megilla it is written, "according to its writing," we would think only in Assyrian characters it is allowed, and not Greek, therefore they come to teach us that even here Greek is proper.

"*One who has it read to him from Assyrian characters*." But he does not comprehend it? What is the use? It is like the case of women and common people, who do not understand

it either, yet they are fulfilling their duty. Rabbina opposed: Why do you compare him to women and common people, and we ourselves, do we understand what is meant by **האחשתרנים בני הרמכים** [viii. 10]? But as it does not matter, provided we understand the proclamation of the miracle, so it also matters not in their case.

"*Long pauses,*" etc. (The term used in the Mishna is "Serugin.") The rabbis did not understand the expression of the Mishna, **סירוגין**, until they heard that the servant-maid of Rabbi, when she saw that the rabbis came to Rabbi's house in small detached parties, at intervals, said to them: Why do you come—Serugin, Serugin? \* The rabbis taught: If one made pauses in his reading, he has fulfilled his duty; but if he read it irregularly, he has not; R. Muna says in the name of R. Jehudah: Even when one has made pauses he has done his duty, provided they were not long enough for the reading of the whole Megilla, but otherwise he must begin again from the beginning. Said R. Bibbi: Rabh said that the Halakha does not prevail according to R. Muna, and Samuel says that it does. Said R. Joseph: Hold in thy mind what R. Bibbi has said, for Samuel decides more vigorously. When a single authority holds vigorously, even when the majority differ from him (and it is an old rule, that where Samuel and Rabh disagree the Halakha prevails according to Rabh, when the laws are not about pecuniary matters).

The rabbis taught: When the scribe who had written the Megilla had omitted letters or sentences, but the reader read it like an interpreter, and supplied what was missing, the duty was done.

The rabbis taught: If the reader has omitted one verse, he should not say: When I shall have read the entire Megilla I shall then read the omitted verse; but he should commence with that verse, and read further. The same is it when one comes to the house of prayer, and finds the first half of it gone through by the congregation, he should not say: "I will read with the congregation to the end, and then read the first half"; but he should begin to read from the beginning, and read to the end.

"*And slumber.*" What is meant by slumbering? It means not sleeping, but being drowsy, so that when he is called, he an-

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\* See Rosh-Hashana for other cases where the rabbis did not understand till they heard the explanation by Rabbi's maid.

swers; but to answer intelligently he is not able before he is called a second time.

"*If anyone should read whilst writing,*" etc. How was the case? If he had arranged the verses beforehand, and first read, then copied them, even if he had the intention, what is it? It is reading by heart. Shall we say, if he was writing verse by verse and reading them, he has not fulfilled his duty either, because by R. Helba in the name of R. Hama bar Guria, quoting Rabh, said: The Halakha prevails according to him who said that legally the whole Megilla must be written and be before him? This is meant: An entire Megilla lay before him, and he read each verse, and copied it.

Rabba bar bar Hana said in the name of R. Johanan: Even one letter must not be written, unless copied from a Megilla. An objection was raised: R. Simeon b. Elazar said: It happened to R. Meir, that he went to make the year intercalary in Asia, and there was not any Megilla; so he wrote it down from memory, and then read it to the community. Said R. Abahu: With R. Meir it is different: Of R. Meir was said the 25th verse of chap. iv. of Proverbs: "Thy eyelids see straight out before thee" (he saw the Megilla in his mind as clearly as with his eyes). Ramai bar Hama asked R. Jeremiah of Diphthi: What is meant by this? He answered him: The words of the Law, of which it is said [Prov. xxiii. 5]: "When thou lettest merely thy eyes fly over it, it is no more." But in the case of R. Meir it was as if he saw it with his eyes, so was it engraved in his memory.

R. Hisda found R. Hananal writing Scripture, not from a copy, and he said to him: It is true, thou art fit to write the entire Bible from memory; but the sages have said, nevertheless, that it is unlawful to write even one letter thus. From what we hear that he was fit for writing it all by heart, and we see that he knew it also by heart, yet he was not allowed to do so (how then could R. Meir do it?). In the time of necessity, when there was no other Megilla, it was different.

"*If the Megilla was written with . . . vitriol black.*" Said Rabba bar bar Hana: This means that which is used by shoemakers for blackening new shoes.

"*Rough vellum,*" when the hide has been already salted, but not polished.

"*But it must be written in Assyrian characters.*" Why? Because it is said, "according to their writing."

"*In a book and with ink.*" Whence do we deduce this?

From an analogy of expression. It is written [Esther, ix. 29]: "Then wrote Esther"; and [Jer. xxxvi. 18]: "Then said Baruch unto them, With his mouth did he utter clearly all these words unto me, and I *wrote* them in the book with ink."

MISHNA: If an inhabitant of an open town had gone to an anciently walled town, or *vice versa*, if he intends to return to his place, he shall read it at the same time they read in his place; if not, he may read with the inhabitants of the place in which he is. From where is it necessary to commence the reading of the Megilla, so as to fulfil one's duty? R. Meir says: It is obligatory to read the whole. R. Jehudah says: It suffices if he commence at "a Jewish man" [Esther, ii. 5]. R. Jose says: Even if from "after these events" [ibid. iii. 1].

GEMARA: Said Rabha: "If he intends to return." That means, to return on the night of the 14th; but if he does not purpose to return on that night, he may read with the inhabitants of the place where he is. And he said again: Whence do I deduce this? Because it is written [Esther, ix. 19]: "Therefore do the Jews of the open towns, that dwell in open towns." Let us see. It is stated already, "The Jews of the open towns." Why is it repeated, "that dwell in open towns"? He comes to teach us, that if one dwells even one day there, he is considered as an inhabitant of an open town. This is right about open towns, but how do we know that the same applies to walled towns? That is common sense: If one who dwells a day in an open town is considered an inhabitant thereof, the same must be in the case of a walled town.

And Rabha says again: If a countryman has gone into a town, he must read with the inhabitants, for why was he permitted to read on the Assembly-day? That he should not trouble himself to come to the town; but if he is there, he must read in any case, whether he intends to stay there or not.

"*From where is it necessary to commence*," etc. We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Jechayi said: He may begin from, "in that night" [chap. vi. 1].

Said R. Johanan: All these different opinions have been deduced from the following verse: It is written [ix. 29]: "Then wrote Esther the queen, . . . with Mordecai the Jew, with all due strength." Those who say the entire Megilla should be read, mean the whole might (strength) of Ahasuerus; he who says it should be begun from "a Jewish man," means the whole power of Mordecai; and he who says from "after these events," thinks



the power of Haman ; and he who says from "in that night," means the whole power of the miracle should be related. Said R. Helba in the name of R. Hama bar Guria, quoting Rabb : The Halakha prevails according to him who says : The whole Megilla must be read. And even he who says from "a Jewish man" also means it should be *written* wholly, if not read. The same says again : The Megilla is called "a book," also "a letter." That means, it is called a book because if it is stitched together with threads of flax it is invalid, as the Holy Scrolls are ; and it is called a letter because if only three veins are used it is yet valid (unlike the Holy Scrolls). Said R. Na'hman : This is when every vein is triple (triply stitched).

R. Jehudah said in the name of Samuel : If one has read the Megilla from the Bible, in which it is among other books, he has not fulfilled his duty, as the Megilla should be separated. Said Rabha : This is when the scroll of the Megilla was like the other scrolls ; but if it was a little longer or shorter and distinguishable from them, it does not matter.

R. Hyya bar Abba said in the name of R. Johanan : If one reads the Megilla bound with other books, he has not done his duty. Those who heard him repudiated him, saying : This is only the case when it is read in public ; but an individual may do so. The same says again in the name of the same authority : The law that, when the Holy Scrolls are stitched together, margins must be left at the top and at the bottom is a Halakha from Moses on Sinai. And those who heard him repudiated him,\* saying : It is not a Halakha from Moses on Sinai, but it has been ordered only that the parchment may not be torn. The same says again in the name of the same authority : If in the case where Moses and Elijah were, there had been a chink as narrow as a needle, they would not have remained alive when the Lord passed, as it is written [Ex. xxxiii. 20] : "For no man can see me and live." The same says again in the name of the same authority : It is written [Deut. ix. 10] : "And on them was written according to all the words which the Lord had spoken with you on the mount." We infer from this that God revealed to Moses

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\* Rashi explained this, that not others objected, but he himself retracted his assertion. But this seems to us incorrect : firstly, as the word "repudiated," in the original, is in the plural ; and secondly, when R. Hyya bar Abba said in R. Johanan's name he no longer lived, how could he contradict himself at that time ? Therefore we translate it as it seems to us right. See our "Ursprung und Entwicklung des Philacterien-Ritus beiden Tuden," p. 140, where this passage is explained.



all the particulars of the Bible (*i.e.*, what words signify that something is to be included or to be excluded), and of the particulars the Gemara deduces from the Mishna, and what the scribes will discover later. And what is it? The reading of the Megilla.

MISHNA: All are qualified to read the Megilla, except a deaf person, fool, or a minor. R. Jehudah, however, allows it to be read by a minor.

GEMARA: Who is the Tana that holds that even when a deaf man has already read it the duty is not fulfilled? Said R. Mathna: The Tana is R. Jose of the following Mishna in Berachoth: "He who read Shema, and did not himself hear what he read, he has done his duty. R. Jose, however, said, he has not." How do we know that our Mishna is in accordance with R. Jose, who says that even if he has done it already, he has not fulfilled his duty. Perhaps it is in accordance with R. Jehudah, who says that he must not commence; but if he has done it already, he has done his duty? It would not be reasonable; because the deaf person is mentioned together with the fool and the minor, and as when the last two have done it the duty has not been fulfilled, so it must be with the deaf.

"*R. Jehudah allows a minor.*" We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Jehudah said: When I was a minor I read the Megilla in the presence of R. Tarphon and the elders in the city of Lud. The sages answered: One adduces no proof from a minor. We have learned in another Boraitha: Rabbi said: When I was a minor I read the Megilla in the presence of R. Jehudah. The sages said to him: One cannot adduce a proof from a man who permitted it (because the majority differed from him). Why have they not answered here also. One brings no proof from a minor? They meant it; firstly, he was a minor, but even if he were not, they would not recognize it as a proof, because R. Jehudah was an individual exception.

MISHNA: The following religious acts may not be done before sunrise on the day on which they are obligatory: To read the Megilla, to circumcise, to bathe (on the seventh day of the purification of an unclean or defiled person), to sprinkle (the unclean as a purification); nor may a woman (who had experienced her menses beyond the usual time, and who was to) wait a day (before she might bathe) do so before the sunrise of that day. But if any of these acts has been done at any period after day-break, it is valid.

GEMARA: Whence do we deduce this? It is written

[Esther, ix. 28]: "And these days are remembered and celebrated." The *days*, and not the nights. Shall we assume that this is in contradiction to R. Joshua b. Levi, who said above (p. 7.) that one must read the Megilla in the evening, and repeat it on the day? What this Mishna teaches, that before sunrise the Megilla must not be read, refers to the second time, *i.e.*, the reading by day.

"*To circumcise.*" Because it is written [Lev. xii. 3]: "On the eighth *day* shall the flesh of his foreskin be circumcised."

"*To bathe, to sprinkle.*" Because it is written [Num. xix. 19]: "And the clean person shall sprinkle upon the unclean . . . on the seventh *day*"; and bathing is equal to sprinkling.

"*After daybreak.*" Whence is this deduced? Said Rabha: Because it is written [Gen. i. 5]: "And God called the light *day*"; and the beginning of the light is called day. If so, then, as it is written, "and the darkness he called night," let the time when it begins to be dark be called "night"; and we have a tradition that until the stars appear it is not reckoned to be night. Therefore, says R. Zera, infer it from the following passage [Nehemiah, iv. 15]: "So we labored at the work, while the half of them were holding the spears from the rising of the morning dawn till the stars appeared."

MISHNA: The following religious acts may be done during the whole of the day (on which they are obligatory): The reading of the Megilla, of the Hallel; the sounding of the cornet; the handling of the Lulab; the prayer at the additional offering; the additional offering; the confession of sin on sacrificing the bulls, the confession to be made on bringing the second tithe, the confession of sin by the high-priest on the Day of Atonement; the imposition of hands (on the sacrifice); the slaughtering of a sacrifice; the waving of the offering; the bringing it to the altar; the taking of the handful of flour [Lev. ii. 2]; the burning with incense of the fat of a sacrifice on the altar; the pinching or wringing off of the head of fowls brought at sacrifices [Lev. i. 15]; the receiving of the blood of a sacrifice; the sprinkling thereof on the altar; the giving the bitter water to drink to a woman suspected of adultery; the striking off of the heifer's neck [Deut. xxi. 4], and the purification of a leprous person. The following acts may be done during the whole of the night: The cutting of the sheaves for the "omer," and the burning of the fat and members of a burnt-offering on the altar [Lev. vi. 9]. This is the rule: Whatever is commanded to

be done by day may legally be done during the whole of the day; and whatever is commanded to be done by night, it is lawful to do during the whole of the night.

GEMARA: Whence do we deduce this? Because it is written: "Those days are remembered and celebrated." The reading of Hallel, as is written [Ps. cxiii. 3]: "From the rising of the sun unto the going down." R. Joseph says: As it is written [ibid. cxviii. 24]: "This is the day which the Lord hath made." "The use of the Lulab," because it is written [Lev. xxiii. 40]: "And ye shall take unto yourselves on the first *day*." "The sounding of the cornet," because it is written [Num. xxix. 7]: "A *day* of blowing of the cornet shall it be unto you." "And the additional offering," as it is written [Lev. xxiii. 37]: "Everything upon its day." And the prayer at the additional offering is like the offering itself.\*

"*This is the rule*," etc. What is it meant to include? The putting away of the spoon of frankincense, and the taking it away (because the old must be taken away at the same time that the new is brought, as will be explained in Tract Mena'hoth).

"*By night*," etc. What is it meant to include? The eating of the Paschal lamb, which is only before sunrise; and the Mishna is not in accordance with Elazar b. Azariah (as will be explained in Tract Mena'hoth).

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\* The remaining laws of the Mishna are also deduced here from verses or from analogies of expression; but they are found in other and more proper places, and are therefore here omitted.

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#### APPENDIX TO FOOTNOTE ON PAGE 53.

Jastrow's Dictionary has just reached us, and we are surprised not to find under sub. מו"י the quotation ומו"י, repeated twice on page 19b, old ed., mentioned by us in our note, which means they struck the *Halakha* on its head. We fail to find any reason for this omission, as it seems to us very important that the quotation should occur.

### CHAPTER III.

#### REGULATIONS CONCERNING THE POSTURE OF THE READER OF THE MEGILLA, AND HIS CLOTHES, BEFORE PRAYER.

MISHNA: The Megilla may be read either sitting or standing, by one person only, or by two persons at the same time. They alike fulfil their duty. In places where it is usual to say a blessing (after reading it) it is obligatory to say it, but not when it is not customary. Three men are called to read in the Holy Scrolls on Mondays and Thursdays; and in the afternoon of the Sabbath neither more nor less than that number may be called, nor shall any section from the Prophets then be read. He who commences the reading of the Holy Scrolls shall pronounce the first benediction before reading it, and he who concludes the reading shall pronounce the last benediction after reading it.

On the first of the month, on the intermediate days of the festivals, four men are to be called. This number may neither be added to nor diminished, nor shall any section of the Prophets then be read (the first of these men shall say the first blessing before reading, and the last who concludes the reading shall say the last blessing after reading). This is the rule: On all days, when an additional offering is prescribed, which are nevertheless not festivals, four men are to be called; five on festivals; six on the Day of Atonement; and seven on the Sabbath. This number may not be diminished, but it may be increased, and a section of the Prophets must be read on those days. The first and the last readers shall pronounce the benedictions before and after reading.

GEMARA: We have learned in a Boraitha: It is not so with the reading of the Torah, which can be read only when the congregation sits. Whence do we deduce this? Said R. Abahu: It is written [Deut. v. 28]: "But as for thee, stand thou here by me." From this we infer, he should stand, and the congregation should sit. He says again: How do we know that the Master should not teach the disciple when he sits on the bed, and the disciple on the floor? Because it is written: "Stand by (with) me" (as I stand so you should stand).



The rabbis taught: From the time of Moses till Rabban Gamaliel the Law was studied standing; when R. Gamaliel died, sicknesses came into existence, and they began to study sitting. And this is what we have learned in a Mishna elsewhere, that since R. Gamaliel had died the honoring of the Law had ceased.

One verse says [Deut. ix. 9]: "I sat on the mount"; and another [ibid. x. 10]: "I stood on the mount." Said Rabh: He stood when he studied, and he sat when he repeated. R. Johanan, however, said: By "sitting" is meant abiding, as is written [Deut. i. 46]: "And ye sat in Kadesh," which means "dwelt." Rabha says: The easy things he learned standing, and the difficult things he sat down to understand.

"*By one person, or by two,*" etc. We have learned in a Boraita: The law is not so with the Holy Scrolls (which only one can read, not two).

The rabbis taught: The scrolls of the Pentateuch one should read and the other should interpret; but not one shall read and two interpret; but the Prophets: One should read and two may interpret it, but two should not read and two interpret. In case of Hallel and the Megilla, however, even ten may read and ten interpret. Why so? Because Hallel and the Megilla are dear to the people, and even if ten read they will give their attention.

"*In places where it is usual to say a blessing,*" etc. Says Abayi: The Mishna refers only to the benediction after it; but before, it is obligatory. As R. Jehudah said in the name of Samuel: For all religious duties, one should pronounce a benediction before they are done.

What blessing should be pronounced before the reading of the Megilla? R. Shesheth of Qartazia said in the presence of R. Ashi: Three blessings: Blessed be He, etc., who has commanded us to read the Megilla; Blessed be He, etc., who has performed miracles for our ancestors; and the benediction of the time. What blessing is said after the reading of the Megilla? "Blessed be Thou, O Lord our God, King of the Universe, who hast taken up our quarrels, who hast judged our judgments, who hast taken revenge for us, who hast retaliated for us on our adversaries, and who recompensest according to their deservings all our enemies. Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who punishest all the adversaries of Israel." Rabha said: "Blessed be Thou, God of salvation." Said R. Papa: Therefore, we should say both: "Blessed be Thou, O Lord, who punishest our adversaries, God of our salvation!"

"*Three men are called to read,*" etc. To what do the three



correspond? To the Torah, the Prophets, and the Hagiographa. So said R. Ashi. Rabha said: To priests, Levites, and Israelites. And R. Simi taught: One must not read less than ten verses in the house of prayer; and if one of them consists of the words, "And God spoke to Moses," it is reckoned among the ten. To what do these ten correspond? R. Joshua b. Levi says: To the ten unemployed men in the synagogue. And R. Joseph said: To the ten commandments given to Moses on Sinai. R. Johanan says: To the ten sayings of the Lord, by which He created the world.

Rabha said: The first of the three men who goes to read in the Torah, if he has read four verses, he may be praised; if not the first, but the second did it, he may be praised; if the third did this, he may be praised (and if all three read four verses each, all may be praised). It happened once R. Papa came to the synagogue of Abiguber; and he read four verses to the first, and R. Papa praised him.

"*Neither more nor less.*" We have learned in a Boraitha: "The beginner shall pronounce the benediction before the reading, and the last reader after." But in this time, when we have the custom that everyone says the benediction both before and after, the reason why the rabbis have ordained so is that those who enter and go away in the middle of the reading should not fail to hear either the blessing before or after.

"*On the first of the month.*" Ula bar Rabh asked Rabha: The portion about the beginning of the month [Num. xxviii. 11], how should it be read? Shall we begin to read with the first verse of the chapter which speaks about the daily offering—eight verses—how shall we do? If two each read three verses, only two will be left for the third, and two should not be read? If they read each four, then for the third will be left seven verses, because about Sabbath there are two, and about the first of the month five? If the third should begin with the ninth verse (about Sabbath), and read the two about Sabbath and one about the first of the month, we have learned in a Boraitha: One must not begin a portion (containing less) than three verses? (and about Sabbath there are two). If the third begin with Sabbath, and read three about the first month, then two verses will be left. Rabha answered: This I did not hear, but I heard something similar. We have learned in the Mishna, in Tract Taanith: "The first day one reads in Genesis from i. 6: 'Let there be an expanse.'" And a Boraitha added to this: From "In the begin-

ning" should be read by two, and from "Let there be an expanse" should be read by one. And it was discussed: It is right that from "Let there be an expanse" should be read by one, because there are three verses; but up to that there are only five verses, and how can two men read it? Have we not learned in a Boraitha that each must read no less than three verses? And in answer to it, it was taught: Rabh said: The second should begin from the third verse, which has been already read; and Samuel says: They shall divide the third verse into two parts.

[Why does Rabh say he shall read a second time, and not begin in the middle? Because Rabh holds the verse which Moses did not leave in the middle we may not split; but Samuel says we may. And according to Samuel may we stop in the middle of the verse? Did not Hanania Kara say: I had great trouble when I was by R. Hanina the Great, who did not permit me to stop in the middle of a verse, except for the schoolchildren, because I had to teach them? Why did R. Hanina permit? Because schoolchildren could not otherwise be taught; and so Samuel allowed, because it was necessary. But why does not Samuel say as Rabh? Because if one enter in the middle, and hear the second reading the third verse, he may think the first has read only two.]

An objection was raised: We have learned in Taanith: "A portion containing six verses may be read by two men, but if it contain five, only one man must read; but if the first has only read three, the second must read the remaining two, and one of the next portion. But, according to others, he must read three verses of the next, because he must not begin to read a portion, unless he read three verses." Now, if it were as Rabh and Samuel say, why does not the Boraitha teach he shall repeat a verse, or stop in the middle? There the case is different; because it is practicable, but not here.

Said R. Tan'hum in the name of R. Joshua b. Levi: The Halakha prevails according to the saying of the Boraitha in the name of the others. And he says again: As one must not begin a portion, to read less than three verses, so one must not stop unless three verses are yet left.

Rabba the son of Rabha sent to ask R. Joseph how the Halakha prevails. And he sent him the answer: The Halakha prevails, that it shall be repeated by the second reader.

"*This is the rule: When an additional offering.*" The schoolmen propounded a question: On a fast of the congregation how

many persons should be called to read? Should we say that because on the first of the month and intermediate days there is an additional offering, four should read; but on this occasion, when there is no additional offering, only three should read? Or that, because there is an additional prayer, four should be called to read? Come and hear: It happened that Rabh came to Babylon on a congregational fast-day. He arose and read in the Torah, and said a benediction when he began, but not when he finished. The whole congregation fell upon their faces, and he did not. Now let us see: Rabh (who was no priest) could read only what an Israelite reads (*i.e.*, was the third). Why, then, did he not pronounce the benediction after he had finished? We must assume because he thought a fourth would yet read, so there would be four? Nay; Rabh was the beginner, and substituted a priest, because he was the best man; and we find in Gittin, that R. Huna did so too. It is right of R. Huna, because, as it is said there, R. Ammi and R. Ashi, although they were priests themselves and the most honored men of Palestine, nevertheless bowed before R. Huna; but Rabh, how could he substitute a priest? Was there not Samuel, who was a priest, and always had preference before Rabh? Nay; Samuel also bowed to Rabh; but Rabh gave preference to him only to honor him, and it seems to us that this is correct, that Rabh read first; because if not so, why did he pronounce the benediction before? But perhaps it was after it was ordained that the benediction should be pronounced both before and after? Then he would have pronounced the benediction after it also? It is different. Where Rabh was, the people were permitted to enter the house of prayer, but not to leave, till Rabh finished lecturing. Hence there was no fear for those who might leave. (The question is therefore not decided, because after the first may be either two or three.) Come and hear. This is the rule: On the day when no labor is done, as on a congregational fast and the 9th of Abh, three must read; and on those days when to do labor is not prohibited, as on the first of the month and intermediate days of a festival, four read. This decides the question.

Said R. Ashi: Have we not learned in our Mishna: This is the rule: On the day which has an additional sacrifice, but is not a festival, four men read? Now, when it is said, "this is the rule," may we not assume that it is meant to include a congregational fast and the 9th of Abh? Nay, a sign only was given that it should not be thought festivals and interme-

diate days are equal in the reading of the Torah : they gave us a rule that even on a day having a preference over another day, one man more must be called to read. Therefore, on the first of the month, intermediate days, which have an additional sacrifice, four read ; on a festival, when no labor may be done, five must read ; on the Day of Atonement, which has a punishment of Kareth, six read ; on Sabbath, which has a capital punishment, seven read.

It is said above : Rabh did not fall on his face. Why? Because he was the most honored man ; and this is similar to the teaching of R. Elazar : He said, an honored man must not fall on his face, unless he is sure he will be answered as Joshua b. Nun, of whom it is written [Josh. vii. 10] : " And the Lord said to Joshua : Get thee up ; wherefore liest thou upon thy face ? " Said R. Hyya bar Abbin : I saw that Abayi and Rabha used not to fall on their faces, but only reclined their heads on their hands.

" *Six on the Day of Atonement.*" According to whom is our Mishna? Not according to R. Ishmael, and not according to R. Aqiba of the following Boraitha : " On the festival five, on the Day of Atonement six, and on the Sabbath seven—not more and not less. So is the decree of R. Ishmael. R. Aqiba says : On a festival five, on the Day of Atonement seven, on Sabbath six—not less, but it may be more." If the Mishna was in accordance with R. Ishmael, it would not allow, as he, more ; and if in accordance with R. Aqiba, the latter says, on Sabbath six? Said Rabha : The Mishna is in accordance with the disciples of R. Ishmael, who teach : On festivals five, on the Day of Atonement six, on Sabbath seven—not less, but more is permitted. So said R. Ishmael. This is in self-contradiction of R. Ishmael? There are two Tanaim : One says R. Ishmael had said so, and the second he had said otherwise. To what do the three, five, and seven correspond? R. Itz'hak b. Nahmani and R. Simeon b. Pazzi, according to others R. Samuel b. Nahmani—one said that it corresponds to the blessings of the priests (where there are three words in the first verse, five in the second, seven in the third), and the other said that they correspond to the three door-keepers [II Kings, xxv. 18] and the five men who could come unto the king's presence [ibid. 19] and the seven who could see Ahasuerus [Esther, i. 14]. And the same taught R. Joseph. Said Abayi to him : Why has the Master not explained it to us before? He answered : I did not know you needed an explana-



tion of it, and you asked me not; did you ever ask me anything to which I answered not?

Said Jacob, one of the Minim,\* to R. Jehudah: The six men who read on the Day of Atonement, to whom do they correspond? He said: To the six men who stood on the right and the left of Ezra, as is written [Nehem. viii. 4]: "The names of the six who stood on the right, and of the six that stood on the left."

The rabbis taught: All are entitled to be counted read among the seven on Sabbath, even a minor and a woman. The sages, however, said: A woman should not read in the Torah for the honor of the congregation. The schoolmen propounded a question: May the last reader from the Prophets be counted among the seven? R. Huna and R. Jeremiah bar Abba differ: One says yes; the other says no. The first gives the reason that, although he reads from the Prophets, he reads from the Pentateuch also, and why should he not be counted? while the second holds with Ula, who said that the reader from the Prophets reads from the Pentateuch only in honor of the Torah, not because it is his task; and therefore it is not counted. An objection was raised: We have learned that he who reads portions from the Prophets should read not less than twenty-one verses, to correspond to the verses from the Torah read by the seven men (each of whom read three). Now, if the same person reads also from the Pentateuch, he should read but twenty-four verses from the Prophets, as he himself read three in the Torah? As he reads only in honor of the Law, it should not be counted. Rabha opposed: Do not we read Jeremiah, vii., from verse 21 to chapter viii., where twenty-one verses are not found? There it is different, because the subject is concluded there. And where the subject is not finished, must we read twenty-one verses? Did not Samuel bar Abba say: I stood many times before R. Johanan, and when we had done reading ten verses, he told us to stop, though it was in the midst of the subject? Where there is an interpreter, the law is different. As R. Tahlipha b. Samuel taught: When must he read twenty-one verses? Where there is no interpreter, otherwise he may cease earlier.

MISHNA: When men come into the synagogue after the prayer has been finished, they may not repeat the prayer if they

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\* Tosphoth proposes it should be read Matzaa, of the city of that name, because, if he would be of the Minim, the Gemara would not mention his name. We, however, have explained in our *Philacterien-Ritus* that Jacob the Mini is right.



are less than ten in number, nor may any of them act as minister before the reading-desk, nor may priests raise their hands (to say the priest's blessing), nor may they read in the Law, nor read a section from the Prophets. When there are less than ten men present at a burial, the customary standings and sittings with the corpse, may not take place, nor may the blessing for mourners be said, nor the forms used in condolence with mourners, nor the seven blessings said on the celebration of a marriage, nor may the persons who join to say grace after meals mention the Divine name. And on an occasion of redeeming land that has been consecrated it is necessary that at least nine Israelites and a Cohen (priest) shall be present, and the same also at the valuation of a man (if he had said: I consecrate the value of my person to the sanctuary).

GEMARA: Where is this deduced from? Said R. Hyya b. Abba in the name of R. Johanan: Because it is written [Lev. xxii. 32]: "I may be sanctified among the children of Israel." All things sanctified must not be less than ten.\*

"*Standings and sittings.*" Because it was the custom for a mourner to say: "Rise, honored men, rise!" and "Sit down, honored men, sit down!" which may not be said to less than ten.

"*Blessing for mourners,*" etc. What is the blessing for mourners? The benediction they said in the streets after the burial. Then R. Itz'hak said in the name of R. Johanan that the benediction of mourners was pronounced by not less than ten men, and the mourners themselves are not counted. The benediction of bridegrooms, however, is also said by ten, including, however, the bridegrooms.

"*Mention the Divine name.*" Why so? Because he must say: "Let us bless our God," and this is not suitable when there are less than ten.† (The Owner of Rewards shall recompense you for the kindness of accompanying the deceased. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, who givest rewards), and the same was said to the condolers.

MISHNA: Not less than three verses of the Holy Scrolls may be read in the synagogue by each person (called to read). One verse only of the Law may at one time be read to the inter-

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\* The Gemara deduces this from an analogy of expression, where a congregation is mentioned, and it is said a congregation is not called an assembly if less than ten.

† It is also shown from what the other laws are deduced, but they will all be found in other and more proper places in the Talmud.

preter. From the Prophets, however, may be read three also; but if each verse should form a separate section, each must be read separately. Passages may be skipped in the reading of the Prophets, but not in that of the Holy Scrolls. What time may be suffered to elapse to skip from one passage to another? while the interpreter does not conclude his interpretation.

GEMARA: "*A separate section*," etc. For instance, Isaiah, lii. 3, 4, and 5, treat of different subjects.

"*Passages may be skipped*." There is a contradiction: We have learned in a Mishna in Yoma the following: He reads Lev. xvi. 7, "After the death," etc., and then in xxiii. 27, "But on the tenth." From this we see that he skips in the Pentateuch also? Said Abayi: It presents no difficulty. In the Pentateuch one may not skip when it is one subject; but if there are two different subjects one may. But we have learned in a Boraitha that even when the subject is the same one may skip in the Pentateuch, and in the Prophets only when the subjects are different? In both cases it is meant, while the interpreter does not conclude his interpretation.

In another Boraitha we have learned: One must not skip from one Prophet to the other. In the reading of the twelve Minor Prophets, however, one may do so; but not from the termination of one to the beginning of the other.

MISHNA: Whoever reads in the house of prayer the section from the Prophets may also repeat the prayer (Shema) and act as minister before the reading-desk; and if he is a priest, may say the blessing of the priests. If a minor, his father or teacher shall act for him.

A minor may read in the Law (in the synagogue) and act as an interpreter, but may not publicly recite the Shema, nor act as minister at the reading-desk, nor (if a priest) say by himself the blessing of priests. A man in rags may repeat the Shema and act as interpreter, but he may not read in the Holy Scrolls, nor act as minister before the reading-desk, nor (if a priest) say the blessing of priests. A blind man may repeat the prayer and act as interpreter; but R. Jehudah says: One who never beheld the light (*i.e.*, was born blind) may not repeat Shema.

GEMARA: Why so? Said R. Papa: This is a reward of honor (because to read portions from the Prophets is not such an honor as to act as minister). Rabba bar Simi, however, said: To prevent quarrels (one should not say: I will read the Prophets and thou read the Shema).

“*A man in rags.*” Ula bar Rabh asked Abayi : May a minor in rags read in the Torah ? He answered : Why did you not ask about a naked man ? Because we are certain that he must not, for the honor of the congregation, the same is the case here.

We have learned in a Boraitha : The sages said to R. Jehudah : Many persons lectured about the *Merkabha* (Divine Chariot) [Ezekiel, i.], although they had never seen it. Answered R. Jehudah : That deals with things in the inner consciousness, and if one meditates about them one may be fit to lecture. But if a man blesses for light it is for the benefit received, and a blind man has no benefit by it. The rabbis, however, hold that a blind man does derive benefit from light, as R. Jose of the following Boraitha said : My whole life I was sorry about the following verse [Deut. xxviii. 29] : “ And thou shalt grope about at noonday, as the blind gropeth about in the darkness.” I always asked, what matters it to the blind whether it be light or darkness, he gropes at any rate ? till it happened once I walked in a dark night, and I met a blind man who walked with a torch. I asked him : My son, thou art blind. Why walkest thou with fire ? He replied : So long as the torch is in my hands, people see me, and would not let me fall into a pit or tread on thorns.

MISHNA : A priest whose hands are deformed must not raise them (to bless the people). R. Jehudah also prohibits it to a priest whose hands are stained with wood or with madder roots, because the people stare at him.

GEMARA : We have learned in a Boraitha : By the blemishes are meant those on his hands, face, or feet. R. Joshua b. Levi said : If there are eruptions on his hands, he must not raise them. We have learned the same in the following Boraitha : If he has eruptions on the hands, or they are crooked, he must not raise them. Said R. Ashi : The priests from the villages 'Hiphni and Bishni all stutter, and must not bless either. The same we have learned in the following Boraitha : One must not make men act as ministers who are from Beth Sheon or Beth Hippha ; also the men of Tibonin, because they pronounce an *a* as an *h*, and an *h* as an *a*. R. Johanan said : A priest of one eye must not raise his hands. But was there not a one-eyed priest in the neighborhood of R. Johanan who did bless, and he said to him nothing ? That man was known in his town, and nobody stared at him because of his peculiarity ; as is stated in a Boraitha : If one such is known in his town, he may.

“*R. Jehudah also prohibits.*” We have learned in a Boraitha :

If the majority of a town worked at the same kind of work, and their hands were stained also, he may.

MISHNA: One who should say: "I will not minister at the reading-desk in colored clothes," may not be permitted to do so even in white ones [because we are afraid perhaps he becomes heretical, as only the Minim are particular about this]. If he refuses to minister with sandals on his feet, he may not be permitted to minister even barefooted. A man who makes the Tephilin round endangers himself, and has not properly observed the commandment.\* A person who places them low down on his forehead, or on the palm of his hand, acts like the Sadducees. If he covers them with gold, or places them on his *unkli*,† he acts like a dissenter who does not care for our tradition.

If one says in his prayers: "The good shall bless Thee," he acts heretically.‡ If he says: "As to birds' nests were Thy mercies extended, so have mercy upon us"; or, "For Thy good be Thy name remembered"; or one who says twice "Modim," he shall be silenced (by authority). Also, whoever explains the text [Lev. xviii. 21]: "And of any of thy seed shalt thou not let pass through to Molech" to mean, "Thou shalt not give thy seed to an Aramite (heathen) woman," (and those who explain figuratively the section in the Law relating to carnal intercourse between relatives [Lev. xviii.]), shall be silenced, and publicly reprimanded. The occurrence of Reuben with Bilha is to be read without being interpreted; that of Tamar is to be read and interpreted. The first part of the occurrence with the golden calf is to be read and interpreted; but the second part [commencing Ex. xxxiv. 21] is to be read without being interpreted. The blessing of the priests, and the occurrence of David and Amnon, are neither to be read nor interpreted; the descrip-

\* In our *Philacterien-Ritus*, pp. 56, 87, 126, we have corrected this misprint as, "it is dangerous and there is no merit in it." We found this misprint corrected in Tract Tephilin of the seven new tracts by Kirchheim.

† About this Mishna we have remarked in our "History of Amulets, Charms, and Talismans," p. 30, note 33, thus: We have already demonstrated in "Phyl.-R.," p. 56 (and at length on p. 65, under the heading (אונקלי) *אונקלי*), that the Mishna in Megilla, "If one cover them with gold," etc., "he acts like a dissenter," refers to the Jewish Christians.

‡ The expression here is not plain. It seems to us that the Mishna meant to say he acts like the Persians, who believe in two Gods—one of good, the other of evil—as the latter part of the Mishna, "who says twice Modim," means: Who praises the God of good for his kindness, and the God of evil that he has not done evil.



tion of the Divine Chariot [Ezek. i.] is not to be read as a portion from the Prophets, but R. Jehudah permits it. R. Eliezer says, neither [Ezek. xvi.]: "Cause Jerusalem to know her abominations," etc.

GEMARA: "The rabbis taught: The Scripture about the creation of the world may be read and interpreted." [Is this not self-evident? Lest one say if it will be read and interpreted, one may ask what was before the creation, or what will be after the world, what is taking place above, and what is occurring below, they come to teach us this is not feared.] What happened to Lot and his two daughters may be read and interpreted. [Is this not self-evident? One might say that we should care for the honor of Abraham: they come to teach it is not so.] What happened to Tamar and Jehudah may be read and interpreted. [Is not this self-evident? Lest one say that we should care for the honor of Jehudah, they come to teach us, on the contrary, it is an honor for Jehudah that he confessed it.] What occurred with the golden calf may be read as far as the first part goes, and interpreted. [Is this not self-evident? We might assume we should care for the honor of Israel. They come to teach us that it is more agreeable to them when it is interpreted, that it causes their forgiveness.] The blessings and the curses pronounced by Moses in Leviticus and Deuteronomy may be read and interpreted. [Is this not self-evident? We might assume, perhaps, when they will hear it, they will become dejected, and say: If so, we will do all we please, as we will be punished so terribly in any event: they come to teach us it is not so.] The warnings and punishments may be read and interpreted. [Is this not self-evident? One might say if the punishments will be read, one might think Israel should do their duties only from fear, they come to teach us this is not apprehended.] The story of Abisolom, Amnan, and Tamar may be read and interpreted. [Is this not self-evident? One might say we should spare the honor of David. They tell us it is not so.] The story of the concubine in Gibeon may be read and interpreted. [Is not this self-evident? They come to teach us that we should not do as R. Eliezer of the following Boraitha: It happened to a man who read in Ezekiel, xvi.: "Make known unto Jerusalem her abominations," in the presence of R. Eliezer, that R. Eliezer said to him: "Instead of investigating the unworthiness of Jerusalem, go and rather investigate the faults of your mother." When it was heard, an investigation was



made, and it was found he was not a rightful Israelite.] Following are those which may be read, but not interpreted: What happened to Reuben and Billia may be read, but not interpreted. It happened once to R. Hanina b. Gamaliel, who went to Kabul, and the reader of the congregation read [Gen. xxxv. 22]: "And it came to pass when Israel dwelt," he said to the interpreter: "Stop, do not interpret except the last verse." And the sages commended him for this. The second part of the story about the golden calf may be read, but not interpreted? What is the second part? From Ex. xxxii. 21-25.

We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Elazar said: A man should always be prudent in his replies, for from Aaron's answer to Moses, those that murmured became lawless; for they said: There is something in idolatry, for it is written: "And I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf." The Blessing of Priests is read, but not interpreted, because it is written [Num. vi. 26]: "The Lord lift up his countenance."

"*The occurrence of David and Amnan.*" Did we not learn in a Boraitha that the story of Amnan and Tamar is to be read and interpreted? It presents no difficulty: Where "Amnan ben David" is written, it must not be read; but the other places may.

## CHAPTER IV.

### REGULATIONS CONCERNING SELLING OF SACRED PROPERTY AND ABOUT THE READING OF THE HOLY SCROLLS ON SABBATH AND HOLIDAYS.

MISHNA: Inhabitants of a town who have sold the open (or market-) place of the town may buy for that money a prayer-house; the money obtained by the sale of a prayer-house they may apply to the purchase of an ark (to keep the Holy Scrolls in); for that obtained by the sale of such an ark, cloaks or wrappers for the Holy Scrolls may be purchased; for the proceeds of such wrappers, books of the Prophets and Hagiographa may be purchased; for the proceeds of the same books, the scrolls of the Pentateuch may be purchased; but if they had sold scrolls of the Pentateuch, it would not be lawful to apply that money for the purchase of books of the Prophets and Hagiographa, nor wrappers for the proceeds of such books, nor an ark for the proceeds of wrappers, nor a prayer-house with the proceeds of an ark, nor a market-place with the money obtained by the sale of a prayer-house; and so in respect to any surplus fund.

GEMARA: "*Inhabitants of a town.*" Said Rabba bar bar Hana in the name of R. Johanan: All this was said by R. Menahem bar Jose, in accordance with whom are many anonymous Mishnas; but the sages said that there is no sanctity in a market-place. But what is the reason of R. Menahem b. Jose? Because on the congregational fast-days the people assembled in the market-places to pray (as is explained in Tract Taanith). The rabbis, however, do not care for what happens only occasionally.

"*The money obtained by the sale of a prayer-house.*" Said R. Samuel bar Na'hmani in the name of R. Jonathan: The case is only about prayer-houses of villages, where they are the inhabitants' property; but in large towns, where money for them is collected from other places also, and to which other men come to pray, the congregation cannot sell it at all, because the prayer-house belongs to a majority who are absent, and it is not theirs.

Said R. Ashi: The prayer-house in my town, Masa-Me'hasia

(Sura), although the money was collected from abroad, yet because they all came for my sake, I am the owner of it, and if I wish, I may sell it. Rabha said: What is said, that the money obtained for sacred property must be spent only on other sacred things, applies only to a case where it was not sold by the seven elders of the town, in presence of the townsmen, but if they did so, it may be spent even on drinking beer (if all so wish). There was a hill, on which had stood a prayer-house, which Rabbina wanted to sow. He came to R. Ashi, and asked whether he might do so. He answered him: Go and buy it from the seven elders of the city, in the presence of the townsmen, and then you may sow it. Rami bar Abha was engaged in building a new prayer-house; but he also had an old prayer-house, which he wanted to pull down in order to use the bricks and beams for the new structure. He asked himself this question: R. Hisda once said, one may not destroy an old prayer-house before the new one has been finished; but this is only because one is not sure whether the new one will be completed; I, who am certain that it will, may I pull it down or not? He went and asked R. Papa, who prohibited. He went then and asked R. Huna: he forbade him also.

Rabha said: A prayer-house may be exchanged for another, or sold, but it may not be rented or pledged. Why? Because when it has been sold, its sanctity departs from it; but when rented or pledged, it remains holy, and may not be used for profane purposes. The same is it with the bricks of a prayer-house: they may be exchanged or sold, but not pledged. This applies to old bricks, but not to new ones which have not yet been used. About giving away, however, as a present, R. Aha and Rabbina differ: one says one may do so, and the other not.

The rabbis taught: Articles used for a religious duty may be cast away; but such as are used in holy service must be hidden. What articles are used for religious duties? Such as a Sukkah, Lulab, cornet, Tzitzith. What are holy things? Scrolls of Scripture, Tephilin, Mezuzoth, also cases of scrolls, of Tephilin, and their straps.

Said Rabha: I had thought before, that the pulpit on which the Holy Scrolls are laid to be read is not itself a sacred article, but only one used for the preparation of a holy article; but where I saw once the Holy Scrolls put down on it (without a cloth between), I thought it was itself used for a holy purpose, and therefore must not be sold. Rabha says again: At first I

had thought the curtain of the ark was only an article used for a sacred article; but after I had seen that they folded it together, and put the Holy Scrolls on it, I knew it was a sacred article itself, and must not be sold. The same said again: Of an ark which fell to pieces one may construct a smaller ark, but not a pulpit. He said again: When the curtain of the ark is rotten, one may cut it smaller for the use of the Holy Scrolls, but for scrolls of parts of the Pentateuch he must not. The cases of the Holy Scrolls and of the Five Books, as they were used for sacred purposes, must be hidden. Is this not self-evident? Lest one say that they are not made for the honor of the sacred things, but to preserve them, he comes to teach us it is not so.

Mar Zutra said: The Holy Scrolls, when rotten, may be used as shrouds for a dead man that has no friends to bury him, and left no property to be used for that purpose, and this is hiding them.

Said Rabha: Holy Scrolls that were whole, and were torn, may be interred in the grave of a scholar, and even if he had learned only Halakhoth (and did not know Gemara). Said R. A'ha bar Jacob: But they must be put into a clay vessel, as it is written [Jer. xxxii. 14]: "And place them in an earthen vessel."

R. Papi said in the name of Rabh: A prayer-house may be converted into a learning-house, but not *vice versa*; and R. Papa in the name of Rabha taught the contrary. Said R. A'ha: It seems to be according to R. Papi, because so said R. Joshua b. Levi: A prayer-house may be turned into a learning-house. Infer from it that it is so.

"*It will not be lawful to buy books of the Prophets,*" etc. The schoolmen propounded a question: May old Holy Scrolls be sold, to purchase with the money new ones? Shall we assume that as the new ones have no preference over the old ones, they may not be sold; or that if the old ones are not sold, the new ones cannot be had, therefore it may be done? Come and hear: Rabba bar bar Hana said in the name of R. Johanan, quoting R. Simeon b. Gamaliel: One must not sell old scrolls for the purpose of buying new ones. There it is different: It is a precautionary measure lest he sell the old ones without buying new ones; but here the question is about such as are already written, and lie ready for us to be obtained when the money is had. How is the law? Come and hear: R. Johanan said in the name of R. Meir: In any case the Holy Scrolls must not be sold, except for the purpose of using the money for study, or for marriage.

From this we see that to exchange the Law for study, one may; so to exchange old scrolls for new ones, one may also. But perhaps it is different, because from studying he will know how to act; and marrying, because it is written [Is. xlv. 18]: "Not for naught did he create it; to be inhabited did he form it." But to exchange old Holy Scrolls for new ones, perhaps one may not? (This question is not decided.)

The rabbis taught: A man shall not sell Holy Scrolls, even when he does not need them; furthermore, says R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, even when he has nothing to eat, and has sold the Holy Scrolls, or his daughter for a slave, he will not see a sign of blessing all his life. Even when he has sold them, and bought new ones instead at a lower price, he will not see a sign of blessing in the remainder of the money. Said Rabha: The case is only when old Holy Scrolls have been sold, and new ones bought, so that some money was left; but when money was collected for this purpose and Holy Scrolls were bought, but some money was left, it may be used for all purposes. And even in the first instance it is so only when the old Holy Scrolls had been bought by the seven elders of the town, in the presence of townsmen, without any condition; but if it was bought conditionally, it may be used even for Duksusia.

Said Abayi to one of the rabbis, who arranged Boraithoth before R. Shesheth (who was blind): Hast thou not heard from R. Shesheth what is meant by Duksusia? He answered: So said R. Shesheth: A rider, whom the people of the town hire for their needs. Said Abayi again: Therefore if a young scholar heard something and does not know it, he should ask a man who usually goes before the great rabbis, because it is impossible that he should not have heard an explanation from the great men.

R. Johanan said in the name of R. Meir: When inhabitants of one town went away to another town, and the elders of that town ordered them to give charity for the poor of that town, they should give (that it should not be suspected they give no charity); but when they return, they may take it back, to support therewith the poor of their own town. The same we have learned in a Boraitha. But if an individual went to another town, and was ordered to give charity there, it should be given away to the poor of that town.

R. Huna ordered a congregational fast. Came to him R. Hana bar Hanilai, with many inhabitants of his town: he ordered



them to give charity, and they did so. When they had to return, they said: Let the Master give us back the money, that we may support therewith the poor of our own town. He said to them: We have learned in a Boraitha: When must it be given back? Where there is no scholar in their town who occupies himself with the public needs; but if there is such a man, it must be given to him, that he should dispose thereof. According to this judgment, so much the more the poor of my town and yours, all are supported through me.

MISHNA: Sacred public property must not be sold to private individuals, because the sanctity thereby becomes lowered. This is according to R. Meir. The sages, however, said: If so, it would also be prohibited for a large town to sell sacred things to a smaller one.

A prayer-house may be sold, according to R. Meir, only conditionally (that if they want it, it shall be returned to them). But the sages permit it to be sold permanently, except for the four following uses: to be made a bathing-house, a tanning-place, a legal diving-bath, or laundry. R. Jehudah says: It may be sold on the condition that it be made an open court, and then the purchaser is at liberty to turn it to what purpose he pleases.

GEMARA: "*But the sages permit to be sold permanently.*" Said R. Jehudah in the name of Samuel: A man may let water within four ells of a prayer-house. Said R. Joseph, what does he come to teach us? We have learned this in a Mishna, R. Jehudah said, he may sell it for a court-yard, and the buyer can do what he pleases. And even according to the rabbis, who forbid it, it is only in case of a prayer-house whose sacredness is permanent; but in regard to the four ells before the prayer-house, which have no sacredness, even the rabbis admit. One Tana taught in the presence of R. Na'hman: One who prays, and wants to let water, shall step away four ells and do so; and he who has done so must walk away four ells before he may pray. Said R. Na'hman to him: "The last teaching is right, because we have learned in a Mishna that he must withdraw from such things to a distance of four ells; but that he who prays should go away four ells, why is this? By this teaching you make all streets of Nahardea sacred, for there is no place there where men have not prayed; hence letting water would be unlawful in them? Therefore teach, he must tarry for the length of time required for walking four ells, but need not walk."

It is right that he who has let water should wait as long as walking four ells requires, because the feet can be besprinkled and he must wait till they dry; but why shall he who has prayed wait for that time? Said R. Ashi: Because for that length of time the prayer is still in his mind and his lips still keep moving, if he had been praying. The disciples of R. Zakkai asked him: In reward of what have you been living so many years? He replied: I never let water within four ells from a prayer-house, and I never called my neighbor nicknames. It never happened I should pronounce the morning benediction of the Sabbath without a goblet of wine: it happened once I had no money to buy with, and my old mother sold the cap from her head and brought me wine for Kiddush.

[It is taught in a Boraitha:] when she died she left three hundred cans of wine, and when he died he left to his heirs three thousand cans of wine. R. Huna stood in the presence of Rabh, girdled with a piece of rubber gum. And Rabh asked him: Where is thy girdle? He said: I had not wine for Kiddush, and pawned my girdle to get it. Rabh answered him: May it be God's will that you should be wrapped in silk. When he married his son Rabha, he slept on a bed; as he was not tall, his daughters and daughters-in-law threw their silken clothes upon him, and he was wholly hid. When Rabh heard of this, he was sorry, and said: When I blessed you, why did you not answer me: and the same to the Master.

The disciples of R. Elazar b. Shamma asked him: In reward of what have you lived so long? He replied: I never used the house of learning as a passage (*compendarius*, thoroughfare); I never trod on the heads of the holy people (he used to come earlier than his disciples, and did not make them rise from their seats on the ground, as it is in the East); and I never raised my hands (for he was a priest) to bless Israel without pronouncing first a benediction. R. Preda was asked the same question by his disciples. He told them it never happened a man should come to the house of learning earlier than I; I never pronounced a benediction at a meal in the presence of a priest; and I never ate of an animal of which the gifts had not been separated, as R. Itz'hak said in the name of R. Johanan: It is not allowed to eat of an animal of which gifts have not been made to the priest even in these days. The Master says: "I have pronounced no benediction in the presence of a priest." Is that a merit? Did not R. Johanan say a scholar for whom a priest, even a high-

priest, who is an ignorant man pronounces a benediction (which properly the scholar had to pronounce, and the latter had not protested, he) deserves death, because it is written [Prov. vii. 36]: "All those that hate me love death"? Do not read "Mesanai," etc. (see Sabbath, p. 236). R. Preda means when the priest was equal to him in scholarship.

The disciples of R. Nehunia b. Haqana put to him the same question, and he answered: I never honored myself by the disgrace of my neighbor, and I never went to bed with the curse of my neighbor (but reconciled myself to him before), and was liberal with my money.

["I never honored," etc. As it happened, R. Huna bore a *pickaxe*. R. Hana bar Hanilai took it away from him, and he wanted to carry it. He said to him: If it is your custom to carry such a thing in your town, do it; but otherwise, if I will be honored by your disgrace, I do not want it. "I never went to bed." As Mar Zutra, when he went to bed, used to say: I pardon all the men who have vexed me. "I was liberal." As the Master said elsewhere that Job was liberal with his money; that is, he allowed the storekeepers larger profits than was necessary.]

R. Aqiba asked R. Nehunia the Great the reason for his longevity. His servants came and beat him (for the question). R. Aqiba fled from them, and went to the top of a tree, and said: Rabbi, when it is written [Num. xxviii. 4] "one sheep," if it is not in the plural why should "one" be written in addition? And he said to his servants: He is a young scholar; do not hit him. And he answered to him: "One" is added to signify that it shall be the best in its flock. (Then he answered to him to the first question thus:) I never accepted in my life presents, I never was obstinate, and I was liberal with my money.

["I accepted no presents." As happened to R. Elazar, when gifts were sent to him from the house of the Nasi, he did not take them; and when he was invited, he used not to go. He used to say: When they send to me gifts, they do not wish that I shall live, for it is written [Prov. xv. 27]: "He that hateth gifts will live." And R. Zera, when gifts were sent to him, he did not accept; but went when he was invited, saying: "They only want to honor me." "And I was not obstinate." As Rabha said: Who yields from his obstinacy has his sins cancelled. As it is written [Micah, vii. 18]: "Pardoning iniquity

and forgiving transgression"; and that is interpreted in Tract Rosh Hashana: To whom does God pardon iniquity? Him who pardons the wrongs of his neighbor toward him. Rabbi asked R. Joshua b. Korha: In reward of what have you lived so long? He answered to him: Does it grieve you that I live so long? He rejoined him: Rabbi, it is a study, and I want to learn it from you. He replied: I never in my life looked into the face of a wicked man [as R. Johanan said: One shall not look at the appearance of a wicked man, as it is written (II Kings, iii. 14)]: "Surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat the King of Judah, I would not look toward thee nor see thee." Rabha says: From the following passage [Prov. xviii. 5]: "It is not good to favor the countenance of the wicked." When R. Joshua b. Korha was dying, Rabbi asked him: Bless me! And he said to him: It shall be the will of God you should reach the half of my age. Said he to him: Rabbi, and not your whole age? Do you not wish I should live as long as you? He replied to him: And what will your sons do? will they tend sheep? If you will live so long, you will survive them (Rabbi was a Nasi). The disciples of R. Adda bar Ahba\* asked him: Why have you lived so long? He answered: I never was angry in my house, I never preceded a superior, I never thought of Divine subjects in unclean alleys, and I never walked four ells without thinking about the Law and without phylacteries, and I never took a nap in the house of learning; I never rejoiced when my neighbor was in misfortune, and I never called my fellowmen nicknames.]

MISHNA: Furthermore, R. Jehudah says: No funeral orations may be delivered in a house of prayer which had become ruinous, nor may it be used as a rope-walk, nor to spread nets therein, nor to spread fruit on its roof, nor to use it as a passage—*compendiarium*—(by a shorter route), as it is said [Lev. xxvi. 31]: "I will bring your sanctuaries into desolation." That means, they remain sanctuaries even in their desolation. If grass spring up therein, it may not be pulled up, that the view may contribute to the affliction (of the beholder).

GEMARA: The rabbis taught: The house of prayer must not be treated with levity: one must not eat therein, drink, decorate one's self there, promenade, nor resort there from the great heat or from rain; one must not deliver there a funeral

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\* In text it is written R. Zera, but it is a misprint. See Taanith, p. 54.



oration after an individual, but one may read there, study Mishna, and deliver a funeral oration after a scholar who was needed by many men. And it has to be swept always, also sprinkled with water, that there be no dust, and no grass grow (where there is no floor). R. Jehudah said: "This is when they are in good condition; but when in ruins, if grass spring up, it may not be pulled up, that the view may contribute to the affliction." R. Asi said: The prayer-houses which are in Babylon, although they are built conditionally, yet in the meantime no one allows himself any levities in them. What does he mean thereby? They do not make business calculations there. R. Asi said again: When business calculations are made in the prayer-house, finally it will become a place for a dead body for a night. How is this to be understood? He means to say that in punishment of this, some one will die in the town who will have no friends, and will be left overnight in the house of prayer. "Decorate one's self." Said Rabha: The scholars and disciples may do it in the learning-house. As R. Joshua b. Levi said: Why is a learning-house called the house of the rabbis? Because some things it is allowed to the rabbis to do which is not permitted to others.

"From the great heat or rain." As Rabbina and R. Ada bar Mathna stood and asked a question of Rabha, meanwhile it began to rain. They entered the house of prayer, but remarked thereat: We go to the prayer-house not from the rain, but for the study of a Halakha for which the mind must be clear as the sunny day, when a north wind blows, purifying the air. R. A'ha b. Rabha asked R. Ashi: How is it when one wants to see a man who is in the prayer-house? May one go in to call him, or not? He answered: If he is a young scholar when he enters the prayer-house, he should speak about some Halakha. When he is a disciple studying Mishna, he should study, entering, a Mishna; if he can only read the Pentateuch, he should say a verse therefrom; if he is unable to do this, he should ask a child: What verse have you learned to-day? If not even this, he should enter, and stay there a while, and only then leave (that it should not seem he came only for this purpose). "After a scholar who was needed," etc. What is meant by this? R. Hisda pointed out, *e.g.*, if anyone of R. Shesheth's disciples should die. R. Shesheth pointed out R. Hisda: If, *e.g.*, one of R. Hisda's disciples would die.

Raphram lamented his daughter-in-law in the prayer-house.



He said: For my honor, and in honor of the deceased, the whole world will come to hear my oration. R. Zera lamented after one of the rabbis in the prayer-house, and said: Either in my honor or in honor of the deceased all will come to hear. Resh Lakish delivered a funeral oration after a young scholar who had been in Palestine, and taught Halakhoth to twenty-four rows of disciples. He said: Woe! that the land of Israel has lost such a great man. One scholar died who had known Halakhoth, Siphra, Siphri, and Tosephta. They came and told R. Na'hman he should lament him. R. Na'hman said: What shall I say to such a great man—shall I say, Woe! that such a book-case full of books was lost? (He learned all by himself and not from masters, therefore he styles him merely thus, but not "scholar," because maybe he learned by heart but did not understand the reasons.) Come and see the difference between the mighty of the land of Israel and the pious ones of Babylon. (Rashi explains it thus: Resh Lakish was of the most honored men of Palestine, as it is said elsewhere that even to Rabbi bar bar Hana he did not talk in the street. Nevertheless, as above said, when a young scholar, learned only in Halakhas, died, he made the lamentation without any questions. R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak was of the pious men of Babylon, as it is said elsewhere that he said: Do not mention fear of sin, because I live yet.)

We have learned in a Mishna in Aboth: "Who uses the crown, is lost." Resh Lakish taught: That means, if one uses for his service a man who learns Halakhoth, which are the crown of the Law. Said Ula: A man can use the service of one who learns four Halakhoth, but not of one who *teaches* four Halakhoth; as happened with Resh Lakish, who walked on the road, and had to cross a stream. A man came, took Resh Lakish on his shoulders, and carried him across. Resh Lakish asked him: Can you read in the Torah? He said yes. Can you read in the Mishna? He said: I have studied four sections of the Mishna. Said Resh Lakish to him: You have cut out for yourself four rows of gold, and still you carried the son of Lakish on your shoulders? Throw him into the water! Said the man: It is agreeable to me to serve the Master. Said he: You may do it only when you will have learned from me something (and then he taught him a Halakha).

The rabbis taught: The burial of a corpse and the marriage of a bride supersede the study of the Law. It was said of R. Jehudah b. R. Ilai: He used to interrupt his study for the above

two things. This is in the case when the dead man has not enough men to accompany him, but if there are enough, one need not interrupt his study. What is meant by "enough"? Said R. Samuel bar Inia in the name of Rabh: It means thirteen thousand men, and six thousand with cornets. And according to others, the six thousand are included in the thirteen thousand. And Ula says: As many men as could form a wall from the place where the man died to the grave. R. Shesheth says: Six hundred thousand men. As the Law was given to six hundred thousand men, so a man who has learned the Law should be accompanied by six hundred thousand men. This applies only to a disciple who has learned, but for the Master who taught, no definite number is to be prescribed.

We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Yochi said: Come and see how the Israelites are beloved by the Holy One, blessed be He. Wherever they went in exile, the Shekhina accompanied them. They were exiled into Egypt, the Shekhina was with them, as is written [I Sam. ii. 27]: "Did I not appear unto the house of thy father, when they were in Egypt?" When they were exiled into Babylon, the Shekhina was with them, as is written [Is. xliii. 14]: "For your sake I was sent to Babylon." And in future, when they will be redeemed, the Shekhina will also come to them, as is written [Deut. xxx. 3]: "The Lord thy God will return"; it is not said, He will bring back you, but *He* will return with you.

It is written [Ezek. xi. 16]: "Yet will I be to them as a minor sanctuary." Said R. Itz'hak: This means the houses of prayer and the houses of learning that are in Babylon. R. Elazar said: That is the house of our Master who is in Babylon (*i.e.*, Rabh). Rabha lectured: It is written [Ps. xc. 1]: "Lord, a place of refuge hast thou been unto us." That means the prayer and learning-houses. Said Abayi: Formerly I learned at home, and prayed at the house of prayer; but when I heard later what David said [in Ps. xxvi. 6]: "Lord, I love the site of *thy* house," I went to study also in the prayer-house.

A Boraitha states: R. Elazar the Kapar said: The prayer and learning-houses which are at present in Babylon will in the future be established in the land of Israel, as it is written [Jer. xlv. 18]: "... as Thabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel is by the sea, so shall he come." An *a fortiori* conclusion is to be drawn: If Thabor and Carmel, at which only occasionally the Law was studied, are counted among the land of Israel, the

prayer and learning-houses, at which the Law is still studied, so much the more that they will become the land of Israel.

Bar Kapara lectured: It is written [Ps. lxxviii. 17]: "Why watch ye enviously, ye many-peaked mountains?" A Heavenly voice was heard, which said to the mountains: "Why should ye be jealous of Mount Sinai? Ye, all great mountains, are blemished in comparison with Sinai." This is inferred from the expression "*Gabnunim*," and by analogy of expression in Lev. xxi. 20, the expression "crook-backed," which is one of the blemishes, is "*Giben*." Said R. Ashi: From this we may infer that a man who is haughty must be considered as blemished.

"*Nor used as a passage*" (*compendiarium*). What is meant? Said Rabha: The explanation is similar to the word; instead of going around, one goes through the house. Said R. Abahu: If the house was originally used as a shorter route, one may. R. Na'hman b. Itz'hak said: If one entered it without the intention to use it thus, but afterward wants to go through the other door, he may. And R. Helbi in the name of R. Huna said: If he entered to pray, he may go out by the shorter road. As is written [Ezek. xlvi. 9]: "But when the people of the land came before the Lord on the appointed feasts, he that entereth in by the way of the north gate to bow himself down shall go out by the way of the south gate."

"*If grass spring up*," etc. But did we not learn in a Boraitha, he must not pull it up to feed therewith cattle, but he may uproot it, and leave it lie? In the Mishna also is meant, he should not pull it up for animals.

MISHNA: When the first of Adar falls on a Sabbath, the portion Shekalim [Exod. xxx. 11] is to be read; if it falls on any other day, that portion must be read on the preceding Sabbath, and nothing additional is read on the following Sabbath. On the second, the portion "Remember" [Deut. xv. 15] is to be read; on the third, that of the red heifer [Numb. xix.]; on the fourth, that of the new moon [Ex. xvii.]; on the fifth, they return again to the regular order. The regular order of Aphtaroth is also to be interrupted on the days of new moon, on that of Hanuka, on Purim, and on public fast-days, also on the fast of the standing men (this is explained in Tract Shekalim), and the Day of Atonement.

GEMARA: We have learned in the Mishna in Shekalim (vol. iv., p. 1): "On the first day of the month of Adar warnings are heralded from Jerusalem concerning Shekalim and

Kelayim." About Kelayim it is the time of sowing, therefore it is right that it is heralded they should have no Kelayim; but whence do we deduce that about Shekalim it must be heralded on the first of Adar? Said R. Tebi in the name of R. Joshua: It is written [Num. xxviii. 14]: "This is the burnt-offering of the new moon for every month." The expression is: "*Hodesh behodsho*" (i.e., new in its new), that means that the Torah said: Renew it. Ye shall bring the offerings from the new taxes of the year, and as with the first of Nisan begins the new year, it must be heralded in Adar that the new taxes shall be collected before or on the first of Nisan, for the purpose that they might be brought in time to the Temple.

Is the Mishna not in accordance with R. Simeon b. Gamaliel, who said: Only *two weeks* before Passover shall it be lectured about the Passover? Nay, we can say it is in accordance with R. Simeon b. Gamaliel also, but because in Shekalim, I, Mishna c, it is said: "On the fifteenth of Adar the money-changers outside of Jerusalem seated themselves at their tables," etc., we must be earlier in reading the portion of Shekalim. What is called the portion of Shekalim? Rabh says: The portion about the daily offerings [Num. xxviii. 2]. And Samuel says: Ex. xxx. 21. It is right according to Samuel that it is called Shekalim, because it speaks about it; but according to Rabh, where is mentioned in that portion about Shekalim? About Shekalim is not mentioned, but according to Rabh this shall be read because the daily offerings must be brought from the new Shekalim as R. Tebi said above. We have learned in the following Boraitha in accordance with Samuel: If the first of Adar falls on Sabbath, the portion from Ex. xxx. 21 shall be read; and the portion from the Prophets should be about Yehoyada the priest [II Kings, xii.]. R. Itz'hak of the city of Naph'ha said: If the first of Adar falls on Sabbath, three Holy Scrolls must be taken out, and it should be read from one the portion due on that Sabbath, and from one the portion proper on the first of the month, and from one the portion of Shekalim [Ex. xxx. 21]. He says again: When the first of the month Tebeth falls on Sabbath, the same thing is to be done—three scrolls are to be taken out: one portion proper for the Sabbath should be read, the second that of the first day of the month, and the third about Hanuka [Num. vii.]. It was taught: When the first of Tebeth falls on a week-day, said R. Itz'hak: Three must read the portion of the first day of the month, and one about the sanctification; and



R. Dimi from the city of Hepha said, Three must read about the sanctification, and one about the first of the month. Said R. Mani: It seems to us that R. Itz'hak of Naph'ha is correct; because a frequent thing is given preference over an unfrequent thing, and we read Hanuka once a year, while the first of the month is twelve times. Said R. Abbin: On the contrary, it seems to be according to R. Dimi, for what is the cause of the fourth man being called to read the Torah? The first of the month. Therefore the fourth man must read the portion of the first of the month. How is it to be decided? R. Joseph said: We must give preference to Hanuka; and Rabba said, to the first of the month. And the Halakha prevails that the main attention must be given to the first of the month, not to Hanuka.

It was taught: When the Sabbath of Shekalim falls when the portion proper to this Sabbath is Thetzaveh \* [Ex. xxvii. 20], said R. Itz'hak of Naph'ha: Six persons should read from verse 20 of xxvii. to verse 11 of xxx., and one from verse 11 in xxx. to verse 17. Said Abayi: The people will think the portion is so long, and will not notice that they read the portion Shekalim, therefore he says six should read from 20 in xxvii. to 17 in xxx. (Thetzaveh), and then should come another and repeat from 11 in xxx. to 17 (Shekalim). It was taught: When the first of Adar falls on the eve of Sabbath, said Rabh, the portion Shekalim should be read the preceding Sabbath, because the tables of money-changers are set up two weeks after the reading, and if it will be read on the succeeding Sabbath, they will not be set up on the 15th, but two days later. Samuel, however, said: It should be read on the succeeding Sabbath. The tables will not be set up at all events until Sunday, because they will not begin on the eve of Sabbath, consequently the reading will not cause any delay. Their point of difference is the same as that of the Tanaim of the following Boraitha: There must be an interruption between the Sabbaths, on which must be read the four portions before Passover; so is the decree of R. Jehudah Hanasi. R. Simeon b. Elazar, however, said: No interruption must there be. And he said again: I say, there must be no interruption only then when the first of Adar falls on the eve of Sabbath, but if in the middle of the week, the portion

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\* In Babylon they read through the Pentateuch once a year, as we do now; in Palestine, once in three years. This question applies to both; it can happen in both that the portion of Thetzaveh before that of Shekalim can come to have to be read when Shekalim should be.



Shekalim must be read on the preceding Sabbath, although the Sabbath is yet in the month Shebat.

"*On the second the portion 'Remember' is to be read.*" It was taught: When Purim falls on the eve of Sabbath, said Rabh: The portion "Remember" should be read on the preceding Sabbath, because, if on the Sabbath after, "Remember" will be read after it has been done (with the reading of the Megilla). Samuel, however, said it should be read on the succeeding Sabbath; and concerning the fact, that the reading of the Megilla must not precede the reading of "Remember," it will not precede in the walled towns, where it is read on the 15th, and then "Remember" will be read before the Megilla. When, however, Purim falls on Sabbath, said R. Huna, all agree it must not be read the preceding Sabbath, but on the same Sabbath. R. Na'hman, however, said: Rabh and Samuel differ also about this. The same was taught also by R. Hyya bar Abba in the name of R. Abba quoting Rabh: When Purim falls on Sabbath, the portion "Remember" should be read the preceding Sabbath.

"*The third, that of the red heifer.*" The rabbis taught: What is meant by the third Sabbath? The one falling after Purim. In the name of R. Hama bar Hanina it was taught: By the third Sabbath is meant the one after which comes the first day of Nisan. They do not differ, however, when the first of Nisan occurs on Sabbath. On the preceding Sabbath the portion of the heifer must be read; and when it falls on a week-day, it has to be read on the Sabbath after Purim.

"*The fourth, that of the new moon.*" The rabbis taught: When the first of Adar falls on Sabbath, the portion Shekalim must be read, and the portion of the Prophets should be about Yehoyada the priest. And what is called the first Sabbath? The one after which the first of Adar falls in the same week, and even on the eve of the succeeding Sabbath. On the second has to be read "Remember," and the portion of the Prophets must be from I Sam. xv.: "I remember what Amalek," etc. And what is called the second Sabbath? When Purim falls on the week after it, and even on the eve of Sabbath after it. On the third Sabbath it must be read about the heifer, and the portion of the Prophets in Ezek. xxxvi. 24: "I will sprinkle upon you." And what is called the third Sabbath? When it falls after Purim. The fourth Sabbath it has to be read about the new moon, and the portion of the Prophets shall be from Ezek. xlv. 18: "Thus has said the Lord Eternal, in the first

month, on the first of the month." And what is called the fourth Sabbath? When the first of Nisan falls in the week after it, and even on the eve of the next Sabbath.

"*On the fifth, they return again to the regular order.*" What order is meant? R. Ami says: To the order of the portions usually read on each Sabbath; and R. Jeremiah says, to the order of the portions from the Prophets (because on these four Sabbaths the portions from the Prophets were different). Said Abayi: It seems to us it should be as R. Ami said, as the Mishna stated above (p. 81) agrees with his opinion.

MISHNA: On the first day of Passover the portion in Leviticus relating to the festival must be read; on Pentecost that commencing "Seven weeks shall ye count," etc. [Deut. xvi.]; on the day of New Year, the portion commencing "In the seventh month, on the first day of the month" [Num. xxix. 7]; on the Day of Atonement that of "After the death" [Lev. xvi.]; on the first day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the portion of Leviticus relative to the festivals must be read; and on the other days of that festival the offerings for each day [Num. xxix. 17].

On the half feast of Hanuka, the portion of the offerings of the princes [Num. vii.] must be read; on Purim, that of "And Amalek came" [Ex. xvii. 8]; on the first of the month, "And on the beginnings of your months" [Num. xxviii. 11]; on the fast-days for the standing men, about the creation [Gen. i.]; on fast-days, the portion containing the blessings and maledictions [Lev. xxvi. 3]; the denunciations therein contained must be read without interruption; namely, one man must read the whole chapter. On Mondays and Thursdays, and on the Sabbath afternoon, they shall read the portion of the Torah in its regular order, but these readings are not available to reduce the regular number, for it is written [Lev. xxiii. 14]: "Moses declared unto the children of Israel the appointed festivals of the Lord." Whence it is inferred that each must be read on the appointed festival to which it refers.

GEMARA: The rabbis taught: On Passover should be read the portions referring to this festival, and the portions from the Prophets should be from Joshua, v. 9, about Gilgal, etc.; and at present in exile, when we keep two days as festivals, the first day should be about Gilgal; the second day from II Kings, xxiii., about Josiah; the last days of Passover should be selected small portions in which it is spoken about Passover. What are they? (This will be explained further on.) And the last days of Pass-

over—on the first of them should be read [Ex. xiii. 17], “ And it came to pass when Pharaoh,” and the portion from the Prophets should be from II Samuel, xxii., “ And David spoke ”; and on the next day [Deut. xv. 19], “ All the first-born males,” and from the Prophets, in Isaiah, x. 32, “ As yet to-day will he remain at Nob.” Said Abayi: And now people have the custom to read as follows: “ Draw out ” [Ex. xii. 21], “ When a bullock ” [Lev. xxii. 27], “ Sanctify ” [Ex. xiii. 2], “ If thou lend ” [ibid. xxii. 24], and “ Hew thyself ” [ibid. xxxiv. 1], “ And the Lord spoke ” [Num. ix. 1], and “ It came to pass ” [Ex. xiii. 17], and then “ All the first-born ” [Deut. xv. 19]. On Pentecost, “ Seven weeks shalt thou number ” [Deut. xvi. 9], and from the Prophets, in Habakkuk, iii. An anonymous teacher says [Ex. xix.]: “ In the third month,” and the portion from the Prophets should be from Ezekiel, i., about the Divine Chariot. And now when in exile we keep two days Pentecost, we do as both have said, but reverse it on the first day of the New Year, as the anonymous teacher, and on the second as above. In the days of the New Year, “ In the seventh month ” [Num. xxix.], and from the Prophets, “ Is not Ephraim a dear son ” [Jerem. xxxi. 20]. According to others, “ And the Lord visited Sarah ” [Gen. xxi.], and from the Prophets, about Hannah [I Sam. i.]. And now when we keep two days, we read on the first about Sarah, and the second, “ God did tempt Abraham ” [Gen. xxii.], and the portion from the Prophets, “ Is not Ephraim ” [Jer. xxxi. 20]. On the Day of Atonement we read [Lev. xvi.], “ After the death,” and from the Prophets [Is. lvii. 15], “ For thus hath said the High,” etc. And in the Min’ha prayer, we read about the laws of legal marriage [Lev. xviii.], and from the Prophets, Jonah.

[R. Johanan said: In nearly every place where you find the might of the Holy One, blessed be He, you find also His modesty. This is written in the Pentateuch, and repeated in the Prophets, and mentioned a third time in the Hagiographa. In the Pentateuch [Deut. x. 17]: “ For the Lord your God is the God of gods, and the Lord of lords ”; and the next verse, “ Who executeth justice for the fatherless and the widow.” It is repeated in the Prophets [Is. lvii. 15]: “ Thus hath said the High and Lofty One, who inhabiteth Eternity, whose name is Holy ”; and the end of this verse is “ yet also with the contrite and humble in spirit.” The third time in Hagiographa [Ps. lxxviii. 5]: “ Extol him who rideth upon the heavens.” “ The

Everlasting is his name," and the next verse is "A father of the fatherless, and the judge of the widows."]

The first festival day of the Feast of Tabernacles should be read the portion about this feast in Leviticus; and from the Prophets [Zechariah, xiv. 1]: "Behold, a day is coming unto the Lord." Now when we keep two days, we read on the second the same as on the first, but from the Prophets [I Kings, viii. 2]: "And all the men of Israel assembled." And on the remaining days of the festival we read about the sacrifices of the festival, and on the last day we read "All your first-born," to the end of the chapter, and from the Prophets [ibid. iv. 1]: "And it came to pass when Solomon had finished"; and on the morrow, "And this is the blessing" [Deut. xxxiii.], and from the Prophets [I Kings, viii. 22]: "And Solomon stood."

R. Huna said in the name of Rabh: On the Sabbath in the intermediate days of the festivals, whether Passover or that of Tabernacles, should be read Ex. xxxiii. 12; and from the Prophets [Ezek. xxxvii.], about the dry bones, and on Feast of Tabernacles [Ezek. xxxviii.], about Gog and Magog. During Hanuka the portion in Num. vii. about the offerings of the princes, and from Prophets [Zechariah, iii.], about the candlesticks. And when it happens there are two Sabbaths in the eight days of Hanuka, on the first Sabbath the candlesticks of Zechariah, on the last Sabbath from I Kings, vii. 49, about the candlesticks of Solomon. On Purim [Ex. xvii.], "And Amalek came," and "On the beginnings of your months" [Num. xxviii.]. And if the first of the month falls on Sabbath, it should be read from Isaiah, lxvi. 23: "And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to the other." And when the first of the month falls on Sunday, the preceding Sabbath it should be read from the Prophets [I Sam. xx. 5]: "And Jonathan said unto David, to-morrow is the new moon."

R. Huna said: If the first of the month Ab falls on Sabbath, it should be read from the Prophets in Is. i. 14: "Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth." On the ninth of Ab itself? What portion do we read from the Prophets? Said Rabh: Is. i. 21: "How became a whore the faithful city?" Said Abayi: And now people have the usage to read from the Pentateuch [Deut. iv. 24]: "When thou begetteth children"; and from the Prophets in Jerem. viii. 13: "I will make an end of them."

"On the fast of the standing men." Whence do we deduce



this? (Rashi explains it that the question is what connection there is between the creation and these fasts.) Said R. Ami: If not the standing men, the heaven and earth would not abide; as is written [Jerem. xxxiii. 25]: "If my covenant be not with day and night, I would not appoint the ordinances of heaven and earth." And it is also written [Gen. xvi. 8]: "And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" Said Abraham before the Holy One, blessed be He: Creator of the Universe, perhaps if Israel will sin before Thee, Thou wilt destroy them as the generation at the time of the Flood and of the Dispersion of Babel. And He answered: Nay. Said Abraham: Whereby will I know it? And the Lord said: Take Me a heifer three years old (*i.e.*, the sacrifices will forgive their sins). Then Abraham said again: Creator of the Universe, this will be as long as the Temple exists, but what will be when the Temple will be destroyed? And the Lord answered: I have therefore ordained to them the order of the sacrifices, and every time they will read it, it will be considered by Me as if they had offered them, and I will forgive them all their sins.

"*Without interruption.*" Whence do we deduce this? Said R. Hyya bar Gamda in the name of R. Asi: Because it is written [Prov. iii. 11]: "The correction of the Lord, my son, do not despise." (And if there were interruption, it would seem as if the correction were disagreeable to them.) Resh Lakish, however, said: That is because we do not pronounce a benediction over chastisement. What else shall he do? We have learned in a Boraitha: He should begin a verse before the curses, and should end a verse after them. We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Simeon b. Elazar said: Ezra ordained that Israel should read the curses in Leviticus before Pentecost, and those in Deuteronomy before New Year. Why so? Said Abayi, and according to others Resh Lakish: That the curses should end with the year. It is right of Deuteronomy, because then begins a new year; but in Leviticus, before Pentecost, does Pentecost begin a new year? Yea, Pentecost is also a New Year's day, as we have learned in Tract Rosh Hashana, on Pentecost is decided in Heaven about the fruit of the year.

The rabbis taught: From the same place where they stop to read in the Pentateuch on Sabbath in the morning, they begin to read in the Min'ha prayer; and from the same place they should begin on Mondays and Thursdays and the next Sabbath. So is the decree of R. Meir. But R. Jehudah said: From the



same place where they had stopped the last Sabbath, they should begin at the Min'ha prayer, and Mondays and Thursdays, and also the next Sabbath. Said R. Zera the Halakha prevails so. The rabbis taught: One shall open the Holy Scrolls and look on them, then pronounce the benediction, then read. R. Shephatia said in the name of R. Johanan: He who rolls together the Holy Scrolls, shall do it so that the sewn rolls should be in the middle, so that it be done easily. The same said again in the name of the same authority: They may be rolled together only from outside, but not from inside, so that the letters should not be seen outside. When one holds scrolls himself, and has to find in it something, he should not begin to roll away from his person, because one scroll might fall down, but he should roll them toward his person, so that they should remain on his knees. When he rolls them from both sides, he should begin with the side toward his person, because if from the other side, a man will be unable to see at a distance what is written in them, and it is a duty to let him see.

The same says again: If ten men have read in the scrolls, the greatest of them should roll them together, for R. Joshua b. Levi said: He who rolls them together, is rewarded as much as all of them together.

He says again: Whence do we know that we may avail ourselves of a Heavenly voice? Because it is written [Is. xxx.]: "Thine ears shall hear a thing from behind them." When is this the case? When one hears a male voice in town, and a female voice in the country, and when it says: "Yea, yea," or "Nay, nay." The same says again in the name of the same authority: Who reads without sweetness, and learns without a chant, of him says the verse in Ezekiel [xx. 25]: "And I also have given unto them laws that are not good." Abayi opposed. Shall I say, because he cannot make sweet his voice, the above verse should be applied to him? Therefore we must say as R. Mesharshia said elsewhere, that if two scholars are in one town, that contradict themselves in Halakha, to them is the above verse applied.

Said R. Pornach in the name of R. Johanan: Who handled the Holy Scrolls, while naked,\* *will be buried naked*. Said R.

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\* According to Rashi, it applies to the scrolls; Mordchai Plungian, however, in his "Alphai Menashe," interprets it in the name of Menashe of Ila that it applies to the man, which seems to be more correct, though he was persecuted for this interpretation.

Janai the son of R. Janai the Elder: It is better that the mantle of the Holy Scrolls should be inserted between the scrolls than *vice versa*. It is written [Lev. xxiii. 44]: " And Moses spoke of the festivals of the Lord to the children of Israel "; *i.e.*, he told them the merit of reading the portions of the Torah each in its time. The rabbis taught: Moses ordered to Israel they shall discuss and lecture on the subject of the day: the Halakhas of Passover on Passover, the Halakhas of Pentecost on Pentecost, and the Halakhas of Tabernacles on the Feast of Tabernacles.

END OF TRACT MEGILLA.

TRACT EBEL RABBATHI (GREAT MOURNING),  
OR SEMA'HOTH (JOYS).

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# SYNOPSIS OF SUBJECTS

## OF

### VOLUME VIII.—EBEL RABBATHI.

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# EBEL RABBATHI (GREAT MOURNING), OR SEMA'HOTH (JOYS).

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## CHAPTER I.<sup>1</sup>

*A.* One in the struggle of death is to be regarded as living in all respects. He still binds the dependents to the law of Yibum,<sup>2</sup> and he exempts from the same.<sup>3</sup> He makes his dependents eat of heave-offerings,<sup>4</sup> and prevents them from eating it.<sup>5</sup> He inherits and makes others inherit.<sup>6</sup> When a limb or a piece of flesh is removed from him, it is regarded as of a living man.<sup>7</sup> The blood of his sin-offering and transgression may be sprinkled until he dies.<sup>8</sup>

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## EDITOR'S COMMENTARY.

### CHAPTER I.

<sup>1</sup> As the chapters are short, their contents will be found in the Synopsis.

*A.* <sup>2</sup> If he is the only brother of him who died childless, the widow cannot marry again until he dies. And if it happened that she did marry in that time, the marriage is considered null and void.

<sup>3</sup> If he is the only son of his father who died at that time, he is considered as a living child, and to exempt the widow from Yibum or Halitzah. <sup>4</sup> His wife or slave if he is a priest, also his mother if she was the daughter of a commoner. <sup>5</sup> If his wife was the daughter of a priest, and he a commoner [Lev. xxii. 12-14].

<sup>6</sup> For instance, if his mother dies at that time and leaves property to him, it is considered his; so that when he dies his relatives on his mother's side inherit from him, but not those on his father's. See Nidah, 44a.

<sup>7</sup> It is not a subject of defilement, to make him who touches it or the tent which contains it unclean, if it has not a certain quantity, as will be explained farther on. <sup>8</sup> The blood of an offering can be sprinkled only when the offerer is alive, and has a substitute in the Temple.

*B.* His mouth must not be closed, nor his openings stopped. No metal vessel or anything which chills<sup>1</sup> must be put on his navel till he dies, as it is written [Eccl. xii. 6]: "While the silver cord is not yet torn loose."

*C.* He must not be moved, nor put on sand or salt, until he dies.<sup>1</sup>

*D.* His eyes must not be closed. Whoever touches or moves him is regarded as a shedder of blood.<sup>1</sup>

*E.* His relatives may not rend their clothes nor remove their shoes nor lament over him, nor may the coffin be brought into his room, till he dies.

*F.* His death must not be announced, nor his deeds proclaimed, until he dies; R. Jehudah, however, said: If he was a wise man, the latter may be done.<sup>1</sup>

*G.* Greetings must not be exchanged when there is a death in a village, but it may be done in a greater city. An infant cut or torn at birth, a miscarriage, or born alive at the eighth month, or born dead at the ninth—all the religious ceremonies do not apply to it.

*H.* The same is the case with an idolater or bondsman, nevertheless they may exclaim over him: "Woe, lion! lion! Woe, hero!"<sup>1</sup> R. Jehudah said: (It may be said also:) Woe, trusted man, who lived by his labor! They said to him: If so, what is there left to say of the upright? He rejoined: If he was righteous why should this not be said of him?<sup>2</sup> No consolation is needed (on the death of) male and female slaves.

*I.* It happened when the female slave of R. Eliezer died, his disciples went to console him. When he saw them he went into

*B.* <sup>1</sup> See Sabbath, p. 353.

*C.* <sup>1</sup> As was the custom at that time.

*D.* <sup>1</sup> For the reason, see *ibid.*, Mishna and Gemara thereon; here, however, this is said in the name of R. Meir.

*F.* <sup>1</sup> Not in his presence, but people may say among themselves: "What a great loss we have in the death of the man who did so and so." Some say even in his presence, because he is used to hear his praises, and will not be alarmed; but we do not find any basis for this assertion.

*H.* <sup>1</sup> If they were worthy of such a lamentation. <sup>2</sup> It seems to us that this is said of a bondman only, but not of an idolater, as an idolater, even if he was a Gentile, is called a sinner according to the Talmud, which declares that idolatry was prohibited to Noah for all nations.

the yard, and they followed him; he returned to the house, and they followed him. He then said to them: I thought that you might be scalded with lukewarm water, now I see that you cannot be scalded even with boiling. Have I not taught unto you: No consolation is needed (on the death of) slaves?

*J.* When Tebbi the slave of Rabban Gamaliel died, the latter accepted consolation. Said his disciples to him: Our master! hast thou not taught unto us that no consolation is needed on slaves? He rejoined: My slave Tebbi cannot be likened to other slaves; he was a righteous one.

*K.* He also permitted him to lay Tephilin. Said his disciples: Our master! hast thou not taught unto us that slaves are exempt from Tephilin? And he made the same rejoinder.

*L.* Slaves must not be distinguished as Father so and so, or Mother so and so.<sup>1</sup> The household of Rabban Gamaliel, however, used the distinction of "Father Tebbi" and "Mother Tebbitha" to the above-named and his wife.<sup>2</sup>

*M.* Ancestors must not be distinguished as the fathers of the nation (or the tribes), except the three Patriarchs; nor mothers of the nation, but the four mothers.<sup>1</sup>

## CHAPTER II.

*A.* A suicide must be buried without any ceremony. *R.* Ishmael said: It may be exclaimed: Alas, suicide! Alas, suicide! Said *R. Aqiba* to him: Leave him alone. Do not honor nor abuse him.<sup>1</sup> No rending, no removal of shoes, and no lamenting. They may, however, stand in line,<sup>2</sup> and say over

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*L.* <sup>1</sup> The word *Abba*, which means "Father," was a title at that time, as "Reverend" is now, or as the Catholics entitle their superiors of the Church and nunneries "Father" and "Mother." <sup>2</sup> In *Midrash Rabbah* [Lev. chap. xix.] is to be found *Tebbitha*, the female slave of Rabban Gamaliel, presumably *Tebbi's* wife.

*M.* <sup>1</sup> Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah, the wives of our patriarchs. See *Berachoth*.

## CHAPTER II.

*A.* <sup>1</sup> With the saying that you lament him, you also blame him that he committed suicide. It is, therefore, better that nothing should be said. <sup>2</sup> When the mourners return from the burial, all those who accompanied them stand in two rows, through which the

him the mourners' benedictions, because it is for the honor of the living. This is the general rule: Whatever is for the honor of the living may be done; but everything which is not for their sake, it is not imperative for the congregation to do for such.

*B.* Who is to be considered a suicide? If one ascended to the top of a tree or a roof, and he fell down and was killed,<sup>1</sup> he must not be considered a suicide, unless he says previously: "I am going to drop myself!" and immediately afterward it was observed that he did so; then it is to be considered a suicide, and he shall be buried without any religious ceremonies.

*C.* When one is found hanging on a tree strangled, or lying on a sword killed, he is not to be considered a suicide, and nothing may be withheld from him.

*D.* It happened to the son of Gornos in Lud, who ran away from school, that his father threatened him. Being afraid of his father, he drowned himself in a pit. When R. Tarphon was inquired about him, he said: Nothing shall be withheld from him.

*E.* It happened to a lad at the city of Bene-Berak, who broke a glass on the Sabbath, that his father threatened him. Being afraid of his father, he drowned himself in a pit. It was told to R. Aqiba, and he said: Nothing shall be withheld from him.<sup>1</sup>

*F.* From this the sages declared: One shall not threaten a child. He shall either punish him immediately, or he shall keep silence. Said R. Simeon b. Elazar: Lust, children, and women should be repulsed with the left, and attracted with the right hand.<sup>1</sup>

*G.* Those who are put to death by the decision of a court must be buried without any ceremonies. Their brothers and relatives may come and greet the witnesses and the judges, to show them that the judgment is considered just, and that they

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mourners pass, and each one consoles them. So was the custom at that time, and in some congregations it is still extant. The mourners' benediction (Tzidduk Hadin) is said in the cemetery just after the interment.

*B.* <sup>1</sup> Although he said he would do so sometime previous.

*E.* <sup>1</sup> According to Rashi, Mishna *A* is incomplete, and must read thus: But if the suicide was a minor, it is different. He said so, that the decisions of Aqiba and Tarphon should not contradict it.

*F.* <sup>1</sup> To all these three, to which human beings are attracted naturally, it is advisable not to be subject, but at the same time, when he attracts them with the right, he shall try to repel them with the left when necessary.



have nothing against them; that they do not mourn for them loudly, but are sorry for them, as sorrow is only in the heart. Rabbi Nathan, however, said: There is no difference between silent sorrow and loud weeping.<sup>1</sup>

*H.* No funeral meal<sup>1</sup> must be prepared for them, as it is written [Lev. xix. 26]: "Ye shall not eat upon the blood."<sup>2</sup>

*I.* Whoever separates himself from the congregation, nobody shall have anything to do with him. And when he is dead, his brothers and other relatives may dress and wrap themselves in white, eat, drink, and rejoice that the enemy of the Place<sup>1</sup> is lost [Ps. cxxxix. 21]. This verse, with the following, is to be explained thus: Why do I hate them with the utmost hatred? Because they have separated themselves from me, and become my enemies.

*G.* <sup>1</sup> *I.e.*, both are permitted or prohibited.

*H.* <sup>1</sup> It is customary that when the mourner returns from the cemetery his consolers bring with them food for the first meal, and in the ancient times they dined together with him. The custom of dining together was abolished because of the poor, who could not afford the outlay for it; so the costly shrouds were also prohibited, as it is explained farther on. But the bringing of food to the mourner is in vogue even to-day. The reference to the passage mentioned in the text means to say, you shall not dine with such a mourner, whose death occurred for the crime of bloodshed (as the capital punishment by the court was only for bloodshed, as will be explained by us in Tract Sanhedrin). It is self-evident that the literal translation of this passage does not mean so, but the sages took this passage as a support to many things. They take this passage elsewhere as a support that one must not eat before the morning prayers, and they explain it: "Ye shall not eat before ye have prayed for your blood"; but they nevertheless use the language as if it would be so written. <sup>2</sup> The continuation of this Mishna will be found in Tract Sanhedrin in a Mishna in Chap. VI.

*I.* <sup>1</sup> In many places the Talmud gives to the Lord the appellation "Place," for the reason which is explained elsewhere, that He, the Lord, is the place of the world (it means that He bears the entire world), but the world is not the place of Him (because He does not merely fill the world, but He also expands out of the world). Others translate it "Omnipotent," which needs no commentary. We will do the same in our further translations. We made an exception here, however, to explain the meaning of this term in the text.

*J.* The same is the case with those who steal the duties, or steal from devoted things, they are considered as shedders of blood; and not merely that, but also as idolaters, adulterers, and intentional violators of the Sabbath.<sup>1</sup>

*K.* From those who are killed by the government, nothing may be withheld, nor from those who were drowned in the sea or a river, or were eaten by a wild beast. From what time must the day of the mourning for them be counted? Since the time that they have despaired of finding. If separate limbs are found, it cannot be counted till the head and the greater part of the body are found. *R.* Jehudah said: The backbone and the skull are considered as the greater part of the body.

*L.* If a husband or wife, or parents, were crucified in the town, the wife, the husband, or the children shall not live in that town, except it be as large as Antioch, and even then they must remove to another part. Until what term are they not allowed to live there? Till the flesh is totally destroyed, and the bones cannot be recognized any longer.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER III.

*A.* An infant a day old must be regarded by his parents as if he would be a bridegroom;<sup>1</sup> and not merely a day old, but even if the head and the greater part of the body came out alive. The expression of "a day" is used by the sages because it is more usual.

*B.* An infant dying at birth is interred attended by one woman and two men, and is carried in the hand. Abba Saul, however, said: By two women and one man. The sages ob-

*J.* <sup>1</sup> We translate here according to the corrections of Elias Wilna, as we follow his corrections throughout the tract.

*L.* <sup>1</sup> It refers to the barbarous times in which, when the government hanged a person, the body was never removed. We conclude this chapter here, as the following Mishna is taken in in Kethuboth, as the proper place.

### CHAPTER III.

*A.* <sup>1</sup> See Nidah, 44*b*, where it is explained that an infant even a day old must be regarded as a bridegroom, if someone kills it, and the same language is used here.

jected to him that one woman is allowed to be with two men in a separate place, but not *vice versa*. No line of consolers is formed, no mourners' benediction is said, until it is thirty days old. From the age of thirty days till a twelvemonth it may be attended by men and women, and is carried in a case under the arm. From the age of one to three years it is attended by the same, with the addition that it may be carried in a case on the shoulder. R. Jehudah, however, said: If the father desires, a coffin may be brought to the cemetery to bury it in, even if it is not three years old.

C. At the age of three it is carried in a hearse. R. Aqiba, however, said: If it is three years old, but looks like two, it is not carried in a hearse; but a hearse may be used for those who look like three even if they are less. Simeon the son of the brother of Azariah said: Anyone borne in a hearse, his praises may be proclaimed. R. Meir in the name of Elazar b. Azariah said: If when he was alive he used to play on the street and was known to the people, then they are obliged to attend, but not otherwise. R. Jehudah, however, said in the name of the same: Even if he was known only to his neighbors.

D. Regarding lamentations, R. Meir in the name of R. Ishmael said: The poor are lamented from the age of three, and the rich from the age of five; R. Jehudah, however, said in the name of the same: The poor from the age of five, and the rich from the age of six. R. Aqiba said: The poor from the age of six, and the rich from the age of seven.<sup>1</sup> The poor are lamented the same as the rich, the rich as the children of the sages, and they as the princes.<sup>2</sup>

E. A child that was able to act for himself may be lamented for his own virtues; if he has none, for those of his parents; if his parents have no virtues, for those of his other relatives. A bride may be lamented either for the virtues of her father or father-in-law, as honors should be exaggerated and not diminished. No honor is to be invented, but may be added to the original.

F. In Jerusalem they used to say: "Prepare good things, they shall be used *before* thy hearse." In Judah, however, they

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D. <sup>1</sup> Rashi explains this: Because the pain of the poor on the death of their children is much greater than that of the rich, as their children are their only joy, having no others. <sup>2</sup> It means that no distinction must be made from the rank of the parents, but from the corpse itself, as all Israel is alike in pedigree.

used to say: "They shall be used *behind* thy hearse." Because in Jerusalem the lamenters used to walk in front of the hearse, and proclaimed only the virtues which he possessed; and the people who were behind the hearse, even such as he did not. And in Judah the lamenters were behind the hearse, and they spoke only of the virtues which he possessed; and the people who were behind them did not repeat anything.<sup>1</sup> From the age of three to thirty, one is lamented as if he were a bridegroom;<sup>2</sup> from thirty to forty he is lamented as a brother;<sup>3</sup> from forty to fifty as a father.<sup>4</sup>

G. R. Simeon b. Elazar said: From the age of thirty to forty, if he has children, or if most others of his age have grandchildren, he is lamented as a father; otherwise, as a brother.<sup>1</sup>

H. One dying under the age of fifty, it may yet be considered as if he were under the punishment of Kareth (short life). When, however, he reaches the age of fifty-two, this was the death of Samuel the Prophet; at the age of sixty, this is the death mentioned in the Scriptures, as it is written [Job, v. 26]: "Thou wilt go in a ripe age unto the grave." At seventy it is considered old age, as it is written [Psalms, xc. 10]: "The days of our years in this life are seventy years." At eighty it is considered uncommon vigor, as it is written [ibid.]: "And if by uncommon vigor they be eighty." "Above that age it is a life of affliction, and so said Barzillai the Gileadite to David," [II Samuel, xix. 36].

Death after only one day of sickness is a death of wrath; at two days, it is a death of terror; at three days, a death of pest; at four and five days, a hastened death; at six days, it is the death mentioned in the Torah; at seven, it is a death of favor;<sup>1</sup> more than that, it is a death of suffering.

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F. <sup>1</sup>We have translated according to the corrections of Elias Wilna, and as Rashi explains it in Sabbath, 153a, old edition. <sup>2</sup>It means to say, as he was in the best vigor of his life, the lamentations were as great as if it had happened to a bridegroom standing under the canopy. <sup>3</sup>It means that he was an active member of society, and his loss is felt by everybody. <sup>4</sup>Who was active so long that he was considered as a father.

G. <sup>1</sup>One of the commentators supposes that at that time there were separate customs for a father, brother, etc. It seems to us, however, that our interpretation is right.

H. <sup>1</sup>As six days are enough for one to reconsider all he has done in his life and to make his will, leaving the seventh for the purpose



The rabbis taught :<sup>2</sup> One who dies suddenly, he is said to have died an abrupt death ; if the death was preceded by one day's sickness, it is a hastened death. R. Hananiah, however, said : The latter case is termed a plague-death, as it is written [Ezek. xxiv. 16] : " Son of man, behold, I will take away from thee the desire of thy eyes by a sudden death (plague) " ; and it is stated again [ibid. 18] : " And when I had spoken unto the people in the morning, my wife died at evening. " If it was preceded by a two days' sickness, it is a hurried death ; if by a three days', it is a reproach ; if by a four days', a rebuke ; but if preceded by a five days' sickness, it is an ordinary death. [Said R. Hanin : From what biblical passage is this adduced ? From (Deut. xxxi. 14) : " Hehn korvu yomechu lomuth " (Behold, thy days approach that thou must die). " Hehn " means " one " in Greek ; " korvu " (in the plural) is two ; " yomechu " (in the plural) is also two ; altogether five.] Death at the age of fifty is Kareth (cut off) ; at fifty-two, the age at which Samuel of Ramah died ; at sixty, a death by Heaven.<sup>3</sup> [Said Mar Zutra : Whence is this adduced ? From (Job, v. 26) : " Thou wilt go in a ripe age, בבלה, unto the grave," the numerical value of the letters of בבלה<sup>4</sup> being sixty.] Seventy is called an old age ; eighty, an age of uncommon vigor, as it is written [Psalms, xc. 10] : " And if by uncommon vigor they be eighty. " Rabba, however, said : " From fifty to sixty it is Kareth ; and the reason why this is not stated in the Boraitha is because of the honor of Samuel. " When R. Joseph arrived at the age of sixty, he gave an entertainment to the rabbis, for he said : " I have passed the age of Kareth. " Said Abayi to him : " It is true that the Master has passed the *age* of Kareth, but has then the Master already passed the *day* of Kareth ? " And he answered him : " Be content for the present with half. " R. Huna died suddenly, which caused the rabbis great worry. A couple

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of taking his leave from his family. Where, however, six days of sickness are mentioned in the Torah we cannot imagine, nor do we find it in any of the commentators.

<sup>2</sup> All paragraphs beginning with, " The rabbis taught, " or with italics, are transferred from Moed Katan (see there note, p. 27). The paragraphs not so beginning will be marked in the Commentary *Gemara*.

<sup>3</sup> There are different penalties for crimes : Kareth ; death by Heaven ; and death by the court, which latter was in four different forms.

<sup>4</sup> This Hebrew word aggregates sixty ; namely, the first letter (from right to left) counts two, the second twenty, the third thirty, and the last eight.



of sages of Hadaeb taught them: "It was stated (regarding a sudden death), only when the deceased has not reached the age of eighty; but if he has, it is, on the contrary, considered a death caused by a kiss." Rabha said: Longevity, fertility, and maintenance do not depend on virtue but rather on fate, as is illustrated by the case of Rabba and R. Hisda, both of whom were upright rabbis and both could bring down rain by their prayers, and still R. Hisda died at the age of ninety-two and Rabba at the age of forty. In the house of R. Hisda there were sixty marriages, while in that of Rabba there were sixty deaths. In the house of R. Hisda there was fine white bread in such an abundance that even the dogs did not care for it, while in that of Rabba there was not sufficient barley bread for human beings. Rabha further said: Three things I prayed Heaven to grant me. Two were granted, the third one not: the wisdom of R. Huna and the riches of R. Hisda were granted me, but the modesty of Rabba bar R. Huna was denied to me. R. Seorim (Amram), the brother of Rabha, was sitting at the bedside of Rabha when the latter was in his last agonies. Said Rabha to him: "Let the Master tell him (the angel of death) not to cause me any pain." And he answered him: "Is, then, the Master himself not a friend of him?" Rabha rejoined: "As my fate was already referred to him, he will not care for me any more." R. Seorim then said to the sick: "I would like that the soul of the Master should appear before me." When it was so, R. Seorim asked: "Had the Master felt any pain?" (at the time of the separation of the soul from the body), and he answered: "It was as if pinched with the lancet." Rabha was sitting at the bedside of R. Na'hman when he was in his last agonies, and the latter said: "Let the Master tell him (the angel of death) not to pain me." And he said to him: "Is not the Master a prominent person?" (to tell him so himself). And he answered him: "Who is esteemed, or worthy, or who can contend (at such a moment)?" He then said to the dying: "Let the Master's soul appear before me." When it was so, he asked him: "Had you pain?" And he answered: "It was as easy as to remove a hair from milk; and yet, if the Holy One, blessed be He, would command me to return to the world I was in I would pray permission not to do it, for the fear (of the angel of death) is too great." R. Elazar was eating Trumah (heave-offering) when the death angel appeared before him, and he said to him: "You see that I am now eating Trumah, is it not sacred?" And the appropriate moment passed

over. To R. Shesheth he presented himself in the market, and he said to him: "Do you wish to take me when I am in the market, as if I were an animal? Come to my house." When he presented himself to R. Ashi in the market, the latter said to him: "Extend my time thirty days, so as to enable me to review my studies, as ye say: 'Happy is the person who comes here possessed of his studies.'" On the thirtieth day he appeared again, and R. Ashi said to him: "Why such punctuality?" And he answered him: "You interfere with Bar Nathan, as no regency must interfere with another, even as much as a hair (*i.e.*, R. Nathan cannot become the head of the college so long as you are alive)." R. Hisda could not be overpowered (by the angel of death), for he kept on studying all the time, and the death angel climbed up and hid himself in a cedar in front of Rabha's house. When the cedar broke down, R. Hisda discontinued his study for a moment and he was overpowered at that moment. R. Hyya was inaccessible (to the angel of death). One day he transformed himself into a mendicant, and knocked on the door and asked for a slice of bread. When R. Hyya handed him what he asked for, the angel said to him: "Does not the Master have mercy with a poor man? Why does the Master have no mercy with me? I am the angel of death." And as proof, he showed him the fire-rod. R. Hyya then delivered up his soul to him.

*I.* Said R. Hanina b. Antigonos: If an old man has eaten forbidden things, or intentionally violated the Sabbath, the punishment of which is Kareth,<sup>1</sup> and he is over the age that short life should be applied to him, what will signify to us that his death was that of Kareth? Therefore we must consider that he who died after only three days of sickness, it is a death of Kareth; at four days, it is a hastened death, etc. Said R. Jehudah: The pious of ancient times have suffered of the sickness of the intestines two or three days before their death,<sup>2</sup> for the purpose of cleaning their bodies of all food and drink, that they should enter clean in the world to come, as it is written [Proverbs, xxvii. 21]: "(As) the fining-pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold, so is a man (proved) according to his praise."

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*I.* <sup>1</sup> Leviticus, vii. 25. <sup>2</sup> According to Elias Wilna's corrections, and according to him, it is to be understood that R. Jehudah opposes R. Hanina b. Antigonos, and maintains that even a pious man may die in two or three days. The text, however, reads twenty days.

## CHAPTER IV.

*A.* For relatives of the first degree—*e.g.*, father, mother, son, daughter, brother, wife, and sister—a priest may defile himself. R. Aqiba said: For those of the second degree<sup>1</sup> he mourns and is prevented also from services, which he must not perform when his dead is not buried; but he must not defile himself.

*B.* R. Simeon b. Elazar, however, said: He may defile himself for his grandfather and his grandson, but the sages<sup>1</sup> say: For whomsoever he is obliged to perform all the ceremonies of mourning, are to mourn with him, but not otherwise. If it was doubtful, however, whether the deceased was his brother or son, or not, he mourns and is considered an Orvan, but he must not defile himself.

*C.* For his betrothed he must neither mourn nor defile himself. The same is the case with his divorced wife, although he has children by her.

The rabbis taught: Over all those of which it is written in the chapter relating to priests [Lev. xxi.], that a priest may defile himself on them, an ordinary person must mourn, and they are the following: wife, father and mother, brother and sister, son and daughter. To these were added: his brother and virgin sister by his mother, and his married sister either by his mother or by his father. And also over all their second degree of consanguinity. Such is the dictum of R. Aqiba. R. Simeon b. Elazar, however, holds that it extends only to his grandson and his grandfather. The sages, however, laid down the

## CHAPTER IV.

*A.* <sup>1</sup> Grandfather, grandmother, grandson, etc.

*B.* <sup>1</sup> The sages differ with R. Aqiba, who says: That for the second degree he must not mourn at all, and it is to be understood so: Whoever is obliged to perform all the mourning ceremonies, *e.g.*, not to sit in a chair, not to put on the shoes, etc., which are customary for the first degree, then also the priest must mourn and defile himself; but for the second degree, for whom he is not allowed to defile himself, the mourning is also unnecessary for him. The case where mourning without defilement can be found is only when it is doubtful, the doubtfulness meaning when the woman who bore the child was suspected.

following rule: "Over whom one is bound to mourn, *with* him he must mourn."<sup>1</sup> Does not the rule of the sages state the same thing stated by the first Tana? There is a difference as to those who are *with* him in the same house.<sup>2</sup> Rabh once said to Hyya his son, and so also said R. Huna to Rabba his son: "In her (wife's) presence observe mourning, but not in her absence." Mar Uqba's brother-in-law died, and he was inclined to observe both the seven and the thirty days. When R. Huna came to him and found him mourning, he said: "Dost thou desire to partake of the mourning-meal? The rule that one must observe mourning out of respect for his wife, extends only to father-in-law and mother-in-law." We have also so learned in a Boraitha: "Ameimar's grandson died, and he rent his garment. When subsequently his son arrived he rent again in his presence, and when he afterwards recollected that he was seated at the time he rent, he arose and rent once more."

*D.* [What is the term for Aninuth?<sup>1</sup> From the time of death till the interment, such is the dictum of R. Meir. The sages, however, say: One day only.] If a high-priest has married a widow against the written Law; or an ordinary priest has married a divorced woman, or one who has performed Halitzah, he may mourn for her, and has to keep the term of Aninuth, but must not defile himself.

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<sup>1</sup> *E.g.*, for a father for whom one is bound to mourn, if the father mourns for his father, the son may mourn with him. The same is the case with a son for whom the father is bound to mourn, if the son mourns for his son the father mourns with him. (Rashi.)

<sup>2</sup> It means that according to the sages the grandfather or the grandson is bound to mourn only when the father or the son is mourning in the house. (Rashi.)

*D.* <sup>1</sup> The term "Onen" in the Talmud means one of the relatives of the deceased, just after he departed and before the burial. It is derived from Genesis [xxxv. 18]: "Ben Oni." (See Leeser's translation, who did not translate *Ben Oni*, but inserted the words as written. He nevertheless translates Deut. xxvi. 14: "I have not eaten thereof in my mourning," the Hebrew term for which is the same, which is surprising.) The law of an Onen is, that only the high-priest may perform his service when a death occurs in his family; an ordinary priest, however, must not; and if he does, he violates the law. Hence is the question here, how long the term of Aninuth must be kept. According to R. Meir, even if there are several days from death to interment, the entire law of it must be observed; but according to the sages only one day, as it is explained elsewhere—from morning till evening.



*E.* For his sister, if she is betrothed,<sup>1</sup> R. Meir and R. Jehudah say he may defile himself. R. Jose and R. Simeon hold that he must not.<sup>2</sup>

*F.* If he has married a virgin but without virginity,<sup>1</sup> according to R. Jose and R. Meir he defiles, and according to R. Simeon he may not. If he has married a forced<sup>2</sup> or a seduced woman, all agree that he may not. If he married a *vigaros*,<sup>3</sup> all agree that he may.

*G.* The general rule which R. Simeon laid down is: For every woman who was fit for the high-priest when she was yet a virgin he may defile himself, but not otherwise.

*H.* For all those of whom it was declared that a priest may defile himself, it is not meant as a permission but as an obligation. So also said R. Aqiba; R. Ishmael, however, said: It is meant as a permission.<sup>1</sup>

*I.* It happened to Joseph the priest that his wife died on the eve of Passover, and he was reluctant to defile himself, so his colleagues pushed him on her and defiled him against his will, saying: It is not a permission but an obligation.

*J.* Until what time may he defile himself? R. Meir said: That whole day; R. Jose said: Until three days; R. Jehudah in the name of R. Tarphon says: Until the grave is closed.

*K.* It is related that when R. Simeon b. Jehozadok died at Lud, his brother Johanan came from Galilee to defile himself with him, after the grave was already closed. When the sages were asked about it they decided: He must not defile himself; however, the grave may be opened to enable him to see him.

*L.* It happened that a youth died and left his property to strangers, and left out his family. His relatives complained,

*E.* <sup>1</sup> The high-priest. See Lev. xxi. 3. When she, however, is not married, but betrothed; hence the difference of opinion. <sup>2</sup> The names are corrected according to Tract Jebamoth, p. 60.

*F.* <sup>1</sup> Without virginity—through sickness, or she has lost it through something else; and according to the sages, the high-priest was not allowed to marry one who had lost her virginity, whatever the reason. <sup>2</sup> Forced—Deut. xxii. 28. <sup>3</sup> *Vigaros*, also without virginity, but only through age; therefore all agree that in marrying her he does not commit any transgression, as he himself could not know it.

*H.* <sup>1</sup> See Elias Wilna.



and demanded an examination.<sup>1</sup> When the sages were asked, they decided not to do so, because as soon as the grave is closed the corpse must not be moved. According to others: As soon as one dies, his hair is changed.<sup>2</sup>

*M.* An ordinary priest who is defiling himself with relatives must not do the same with a stranger, even at the same time, in case the stranger has sufficient attendants; but if he has not he may defile himself, and afterward retire to an undefiled place. The same is the case when he begins, and others come to relieve him.

*N.* When there were two roads, one short but unclean and the other long but clean, if the people went on the long one he should accompany them, and if the people took the short road he should go with them, for the honor of the people.

*O.* If he was engaged in burying his dead, so long as he is in the grave he may receive from strangers for burial, but if he was out he must not return.

*P.* If he has defiled himself on the same day, R. Tarphon makes him culpable to a sin-offering, and R. Aqiba makes him free. All agree, however, that he is culpable when he does so on the morrow, because he has added one more day to be unclean, as he must count seven days after the last defilement.

*Q.* A priest may defile himself for relatives even if they are not fit for the priesthood; *e.g.*, for his son, daughter,<sup>1</sup> brother or sister, begotten by a temple-servant or bastard, except for those begotten by a slave or a Gentile.<sup>2</sup>

*R.* A high-priest who defiles himself with the dead, or bares his head, or rends his garments, is liable to the punishment of stripes.

*S.* For all uncleanness for which a Nazarite must shave off his hair, he is liable to stripes; otherwise he is not.

*T.* A high-priest who enters a cemetery is liable to stripes.

*L.* <sup>1</sup> If he was of age to make a will. <sup>2</sup> It is difficult to understand the real meaning of it. It seems to us that it means that the examination of the hair could decide nothing, as it could have grown after the death.

*Q.* <sup>1</sup> If they were born by a woman whom he married unlawfully. <sup>2</sup> According to the Talmud, an illegitimate child begotten by parents of two different creeds without being married, must be considered according to the creed of the mother; hence they are not his children.

*U.* If he enters the yard of a cemetery, or if he goes outside of Palestine, he is liable to chastisement (rabbinically).

*V.* If he enters a field where there is a lost grave, he is not culpable till he traverses every bit of it.

*W.* A priest may defile himself by going outside of Palestine to attend a civil or criminal court; to sanctify the month; to intercalate the year, and to save his field from the idolaters. He may bring a complaint and sign it in their courts; however, he must first make a declaration that he is going for this purpose.

*X.* He may also leave Palestine for the purpose of studying the Law, or to get married. Said R. Jehudah: He may do the former when there is nobody in the place to learn from; otherwise he may not. R. Jose, however, said: Even if there is one to learn from he may do so, because not everyone can teach. It happened to Joseph the priest that he went to his master to study the Law; he went outside of Palestine to R. Jose in Zaidin.

*Y.* A priest may defile himself with a piece of bone of his father's body, even if it was as large as a grain of barley; R. Jehudah, however, said: He must not. A priest must not defile himself with a limb cut off a living body, be it even that of his father.<sup>1</sup>

*Z.* It happened to Joseph Parkass that he had an abscess on his foot, and the surgeon came to cut it off. He said to him: If thou wilt leave of it a bit of the size of a hair, let me know. When the surgeon told him that he did so, he summoned his son Nehemiah and said: My son, till here thou art obliged to attend me, but no farther. For the sages said: One must not defile himself for a limb cut off a living body, be it even that of his father. When the sages heard of it, they said: The following passage: "My life is in my hand continually, yet thy Law do I not forget" [Ps. cxix. 109], applies to him; and also: "There is many a righteous man that perisheth in his righteousness" [Prov. vii. 15].

*AA.* If he was on the road and he found a Meth-Mitzvah,<sup>1</sup>

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*Y.* <sup>1</sup>The law is, if a whole limb was separated from a living body it is a subject of defilement; but if flesh was separated from that limb, even if it was more than the size of an olive, it is not. However, when the limb was separated from a corpse, and flesh separated from it the size of an olive, it defiles.

*AA.* <sup>1</sup>This expression is used in the whole Talmud about one who died without relatives, or if he died somewhere far from them,

he is obliged to attend to it. What is to be considered such? If he would call for help and his cry could not be heard in the nearest town; but when it is heard, it is not considered as such (and he must not defile himself).

*BB.* It is always considered a Meth-Mitzvah unless there are sufficient people to attend to its funeral.

*CC.* If there was a high-priest and a Nazarite, the high-priest shall defile himself but not the Nazarite, according to R. Eliezer; for the latter must bring an offer for his defilement, and the former not. The sages, however, say: Rather let the Nazarite bring a hundred offers than cause defilement even to an ordinary priest; because the sanctification of the priest is from birth and forever, and the Nazarite's is only temporary.

*DD.* All agree that if there was an anointed high-priest and an unanointed one who is recognized only by his many garments,<sup>1</sup> the latter must defile himself and not the former; when there was the latter and an overseer, or an overseer and an ex-overseer, or an ex-overseer and a priest anointed for the war, or he and a common priest, or a common priest and a Levite, or he and an Israelite, the second of each pair always must defile himself but not the first. If both are equals, the quickest of the two must do so; and if both are quick, the one that expresses the desire shall do so.

*EE.* If it was found between a ploughed and an abandoned field, it shall be buried in the latter; between a ploughed and a sown field, it shall be buried in the former; between a sown field and an orchard, or an orchard and a field in which *persea* grows,

or in a lonely place. "Meth" means a corpse, "Mitzvah" means a commandment, and together they express: A corpse which anybody who finds is commanded to attend to its burial.

*DD.* <sup>1</sup> There is a tradition that in the time of King Josiah the oil of anointment made by Moses was concealed, and from that time the ascent of a high-priest was made only with his prescribed garments, and in the Talmud such a high-priest was called by the name of "who was known by his many garments." Hence if it happened that an anointed ex-high-priest were in company with a high-priest who was elected after the oil of anointment was concealed, the latter, though he is a high-priest, must defile himself, because his degree in sanctification is considered lower than that of the former; and so is it with all the pairs—the second is lower in sanctification than the first.

it shall be buried in the former. If both places are equal in value, it shall be buried in the nearest one; and if they are equal in distance, it can be buried wherever desirable.

*FF.* Said R. Aqiba: "The following incident was the commencement of my reward to be counted among the wise. I once arose early and found a slain body. I burdened myself with it for three legal limits of the Sabbath, until I brought it to a cemetery, and I buried it. When I related this to the sages, they told me that my every step was considered as if I had shed blood.<sup>1</sup> Whereupon I drew the following *a fortiori* conclusion: When, having in view to perform a meritorious deed, I have transgressed so much, how much the more would I have sinned if I had had no such intention!" Whenever R. Aqiba was reminded of this incident he said: This was the commencement of my reward.<sup>2</sup>

## CHAPTER V.

*A.* No work must be done by a mourner on all the seven days after the burial; nor by his children, his servants, or his cattle. As he and they all are not allowed, so are others not allowed to do any work for him.

The rabbis taught: A mourner is prohibited to do any work during the first three days, even the indigent who lives on charity; thenceforward he may do it privately; and the housewife may spin with her spindle.

The rabbis taught: A mourner must not visit another mourner during the first three days; thenceforth he may, but he must not sit among the condolers, but among those who are being condoled.

The rabbis taught: A mourner is prohibited the first three days from greeting others; from the third to the seventh he may only answer a greeting; thenceforward he may greet and answer as usual. When the sons of R. Aqiba died, an enormous crowd flocked to the funeral. R. Aqiba ascended the rostrum, and addressed the people: "Brothers in Israel, listen to my words: It is not because of merit or station of mine that ye appear here, for

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*FF.* <sup>1</sup> Because the law is that it must be buried on the place where it is found. <sup>2</sup> *I.e.*, From the answer of the sages he learned that he knew nothing of the Law, and he began to study until he reached his eminence.



assuredly there are my superiors in this city. Oh, your reward will be great. Ye have done homage to the Law; your presence would suffice to console me, even if I had buried two bridegrooms; ye appeared here because you thought to yourselves [Psalms, xxxvii. 31]: 'The law of his God is in his heart.' (Hence we see that it is permitted to greet even within the first three days?) Where the honor of the public is concerned the case is different.

*"From the third to the seventh day he may answer, but not greet."* There is a contradiction from the following Boraitha: One who meets his friend who is in mourning, if within twelve months he may speak to him words of consolation, but must not greet him; if after twelve months, he may greet him, but not speak to him words of consolation, unless indirectly. R. Meir said: To what may the case of one speaking to his friend, a mourner, words of consolation after twelve months be compared? To one whose foot was dislocated, and after having it cured, met a physician who said to him: "Come with me and I will dislocate it again, and cure it in order to prove to you the efficiency of my drugs"? This presents no difficulty. This Boraitha relates to mourning over father or mother; the former statement relates to mourning over other relatives. But have we not learned in another Boraitha that he may speak to him words of consolation indirectly? Our Boraitha may also be explained in the same sense; viz., "He shall not speak to him words of consolation directly."

The rabbis taught: A mourner, during the first three days, if he arrives from a place not distant, may adopt the same computation of the time as the local mourners, but if he arrives from a distant place he must have his own computation; thenceforth, if he even arrives from a place not distant, he must have his own computation. R. Simeon, however, said: "Even if he arrived on the seventh day, if only from a near-by place, he may adopt the computation of the local mourners." The Master said above: "The first three days, one who arrives from a near-by place," etc. Said R. Hyya bar Abba in the name of R. Johanan: "This is the case only where the eldest of the family is at home at the time." The schoolmen propounded a question: "How is it if the eldest of the family has gone to the cemetery?" Come and hear: R. Hyya bar Abba said in the name of R. Johanan: "Even if the eldest of the house has gone to the cemetery, he may compute with them (the local mourners)." But have we not learned in another Boraitha that he must have his own computation? This



presents no difficulty: One case is when he arrived within the first three days, and the other when he arrived after the first three days. As Rabh said to the inhabitants of Zalpuni: "Those who arrive within the first three days may compute with you; those who do not, must compute for themselves." Rabha said to the inhabitants of M'huza: "You who do not follow the coffin (to the cemetery, but only as far as the town-gate) may compute (the mourning) from the minute you turn your faces away from the town-gate."

<sup>1</sup>The Boraitha states: R. Simeon said, etc. Said R. Hyya bar Gamda in the name of Joseph b. Saul, quoting Rabbi: "The case is only when he arrived before the condolers departed."

<sup>2</sup>It is written [Jerem. xxii. 10]: "Weep not for the dead and do not bemoan him." Weep not—that is, not more than sufficient; and do not bemoan him—that is, not more than prescribed. How so? During the first three days—weeping; the seven—lamentation; during the thirty days—not to calender clothes and cut the hair. After that period the Holy One, blessed be He, says: "Be not more merciful than I am." It is written [ibid., ibid.]: "Weep sorely for him that goeth away." Said R. Jehudah: "This means one who goeth away childless." R. Joshua b. Levi had never gone to console a mourner unless the deceased died childless, for it is written [ibid., ibid.]: "Weep sorely for the one that goeth away, for he shall never return any more, and see the land of his birth." R. Levi said: "A mourner the first three days must imagine to himself as if a sword is placed between his shoulders; between the third and seventh day, as if it is opposite him in a corner; from that day on, as if it passes in front of him in the street."<sup>3</sup>

"*The bier of a woman must at no time be set there,*" etc. R. Ami said: "For what purpose was the death of Miriam stated closely following the law of the red cow? To teach that as the red cow atoned for sin, so also does the death of the righteous." Said R. Elazar: "For the same purpose was the death of Aaron closely written to the description of the priests' garb; viz., as the priests in their garb atoned for the sins, so also does the death of the righteous."

## CHAPTER V.

A. <sup>1</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan. <sup>2</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

<sup>3</sup> This illustrates the different degrees in which it must be borne in mind.

*B.* It is permitted for others to do work involving things perishable; *e.g.*, his grain may be garnered and thrashed, his tubs may be scoured, and if his olives are turned, R. Jehudah says he may put the first press-block on, etc.

The rabbis taught: The following things are prohibited to a mourner: labor, washing, anointing, sexual intercourse, wearing shoes, reading the Law, the Prophets, the Hagiographa, studying the Mishna, Midrash, Halakha, Talmud, and Agada; but if, however, the public require his services, he need not restrain himself. As it happened, the son of R. Jose died in Sepphoris, and the latter notwithstanding came to college and lectured the whole day long. Rabba bar bar Hana was once in mourning, and he was inclined not to go out to deliver his usual lecture. Said R. Hanina to him: "If the public requires one's services, he need not restrain himself." He then wanted to employ an interpreter. Said Rabh to him: "We learned in a Boraitha: 'But he should not employ an interpreter.'" How, then, shall he do it? As we have learned in the following Boraitha: It happened that the son of R. Jehudah bar Ilai died, and the latter came to college followed by R. Hanania b. Akabia, who took a seat at his side. He (R. Jehudah bar Ilai) whispered (the lecture) to R. Hanania b. Akabia, and the latter to the interpreter, and the interpreter announced it aloud to the public.

The rabbis taught: A mourner must not wear phylacteries during the first three days, but from and including the third day he is allowed to do so, and need not remove them on the arrival of new persons. Such is the dictum of R. Eliezer. R. Jehudah, however, said that he must not wear them only during the first two days, but from and including the second day he is allowed; but on the arrival of new persons he must remove them.

R. Hyya bar Abba, R. Ami, and R. Itz'hak of Naph'ha were sitting in the cottage of R. Itz'hak b. Elazar, and a statement resulted: "Whence is it deduced that mourning lasts for seven days? It is written [Amos, viii. 10]: 'And I will change your feasts into mourning.' As the feast lasts for seven days, so does also mourning." But perhaps Pentecost is meant, which lasts only for one day? The latter one is applied according to Resh Lakish; for Resh Lakish said in the name of R. Jehudah the Second: Whence do we know that remote information (of the occurrence of a death in the family) makes mourning customary for one day only? From the passage [*ibid.*, *ibid.*]:

“And I will change your feasts into mourning.” And we find one festival which lasts for one day only.

C. <sup>1</sup>If he was the only baker in town, he may do his work privately for the sake of the people.

D. If one was cutting another's hair, or was having his hair cut, and he was told that his father was dead, he might finish it. Workingmen who receive work from a mourner are forbidden to do this work at his house, but they are allowed to do it at theirs. R. Simeon b. Jo'hai said: A day laborer is forbidden in any case. Contract work may not be done on his premises, but it may on theirs. Work on anything attached to the ground must not be done in either case, and work to be done in another city is allowed in either case.

E. When one mourning succeeds another, he may cut his hair with a knife but not with shears. If his clothes are dirty, he may wash them in cold water but not in feet-water.<sup>1</sup> A mourner and one who is under the ban, when on the road, are allowed to wear sandals; however, they must remove them as soon as they reach the town. So is the law also for the 9th of Abh, or a general fast-day.

<sup>2</sup> It is certain that a mourner must not cut his hair, for the Merciful One expressly directed the sons of Aaron [ibid. x. 6]: “The hair of your head you shall *not* let grow long”; hence the case is not so with other mourners. The question, however, is, whether those who are under the ban, and lepers, may cut their hair? Come and hear: Those who are under the ban, and those afflicted with leprosy, are prohibited from cutting their hair and washing (their clothes). One who was under the ban and died in such a state, the Beth Din stone his coffin. Said R. Jehudah: “It does not mean a heap of stones, as was the case with Achan [Josh. vii. 26], but it means that the Beth Din places a big stone on his coffin, to teach that whoever dies while under the ban, his coffin is stoned.

<sup>3</sup> A mourner must wrap up his head, for the Merciful One

C. <sup>1</sup> For former Mishnas, see Moed Katan, pp. 19-20.

E. <sup>1</sup> In Tract Krithath, where it speaks of the preparation of the spices for the incense, the Gemara says: To make it stronger—*mei raglayim*; literally, “feet-water (wine, according to some commentators) would be good for it”; but this must not be brought into the Temple court. The same term is found in Nidah, 61b, in the Mishna, among the spices which remove stains. <sup>2</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan. <sup>3</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

directed Ezekiel [Ezek. xxiv. 17]: "And cover *not* thyself to thy upper lip." Hence, others must cover. How is it, however, with one who is under the ban? Said R. Joseph: Come and hear (Taanith): "And they wrapped up their heads and sat as if they were under the ban, or mourners, until they were commiserated by Heaven." Said Abayi to him: "Perhaps they have done that, because they have considered themselves as put under the ban by Heaven, in which case it is very rigorous." What is the law in regard to a leper? Come and hear: It is written [Lev. xiii. 45]: "And he shall cover himself up to his upper lip." Hence we see that wrapping up is necessary. A mourner must not wear phylacteries, for Ezekiel was commanded [Ezek. xxiv. 17] to put them on.<sup>4</sup> Hence we must say that others must not. But the question is as to one who is under the ban, in regard to phylacteries?<sup>5</sup> This question was not decided. It is certain that a mourner must not greet any one, as Ezekiel was commanded [ibid.]: "Sigh in silence." But how is the case with one who is under the ban? Said R. Joseph: Come and hear (Taanith, ibid.): "And to greet one another as if they were rebuked from Heaven." Said Abayi to him: "Perhaps this case is different, because it is very strict."

*F.* No ban is for less than thirty days, and no rebuke is for less than seven days.

*G.* Said Rabban Gamaliel: He to whom the court has stretched out its hand, although he was again befriended, will not leave this world peaceably.

## CHAPTER VI.

*A.* A mourner must not read the Pentateuch, Prophets, and Hagiographa. He is also not allowed to study Mishna, Talmud, Halakha, and Hagadah. He is also not allowed to wash, to anoint, to wear shoes, or to have sexual intercourse with his wife. He must cover his head and lower his couch. Rabban Gamaliel washed himself when his wife died (see Mishna Berachoth, 166).

<sup>1</sup> A mourner must not study the Law, because the Merciful

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<sup>4</sup> The Talmud explains this passage to refer to the phylacteries.

<sup>5</sup> See our "Phylacteries Ritual," pp. 49 and 55.

## CHAPTER VI.

*A.* <sup>1</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.



One commanded Ezekiel: "Sigh in silence" [ibid.]. But how is it with one who is under the ban? Said R. Joseph: Come and hear: We have learned: "One who is put under the ban may study for himself and also with others; he may be hired and he may hire others. But the case is otherwise with one who was excommunicated; the latter may, however, study for himself in order not to discontinue his studies. He may also establish for himself a small store in order to earn a living." Rabh said: "He may sell water in the market of Araboth."

<sup>2</sup>A mourner must not wash his clothes, as it is written [II Sam. xiv. 2]: "Then sent Joab to Thekoa, and he fetched thence a wise woman, and said to her," etc., "and anoint thyself not with oil; but be as a woman that hath these many days been mourning for the dead." What is the case with those under the ban? Come and hear: "Those who are under the ban are prohibited from cutting their hair and washing their clothes." Infer herefrom. A mourner must have his garment rent, because the Merciful One commanded the sons of Aaron [Lev. x. 6]: "And your garments you shall *not* rend"; hence others must. A mourner must lower his couch (place the mattress near or on the floor), as Bar Qappara taught: "(God said) I had placed my image among them, and for their sins I upset it (decreed death). Let them now lower their beds." A mourner must not work, for it is written [Amos, viii. 10]: "And I will change your feasts into mourning." As on the feast it is prohibited to do any work, so also is the case with the mourner. May one who is under the ban work? Said R. Joseph: Come and hear (Taanith): "When it was stated that it is prohibited to do work, it referred only to the day-time but not to the evening; and the same is the case with one who is under the ban." A mourner must not wash himself, as it is written [II Sam. xiv. 2]: "And anoint thyself not with oil"; and anointing includes also washing.

<sup>3</sup>And the Halakha prevails that a mourner must not bathe his entire body in either warm or cold water for seven days, but he may bathe his face, hands, and feet with cold water but not with warm. To anoint himself ever so little is prohibited, however, for a mourner; but he may do so for the purpose of removing the dirt from a certain part of his body.

<sup>4</sup>A mourner must not wear shoes, because Ezekiel was com-

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<sup>2</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan. <sup>3</sup> Transferred from Taanith. <sup>4</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.



manded [Ezek. xxiv. 17]: "And the shoes put on thy feet." Hence others must not. A mourner must have no intercourse with his wife, as it is written [II Sam. xii. 24]: "And David *comforted* Bath Sheba, and he went in unto her, and lay with her." Hence, before comforting it is prohibited.

On the first three days if a mourner is greeted he shall say: "I am a mourner." However, from the fourth day onward he may answer half-heartedly.

*B.* When the death occurs in the same city, he must not accompany the others on the first two days; on the third he may go out and stand in the line for the purpose of being consoled, but he must not console others. All this is only when there are sufficient pall-bearers and burial attendants; otherwise he must accompany the others even on the first day.

The rabbis taught: "A mourner on the first Sabbath<sup>1</sup> must be confined to his house. On the second he may leave the house, but he may not occupy his usual seat (in the prayer-house); on the third he may occupy his usual seat, but he must refrain from conversation; and on the fourth Sabbath he is as any other person." R. Jehudah said: "As to the first Sabbath, it was not necessary at all to state that he must be confined to the house, for it is self-evident, because all come to comfort him on that day. But the above order begins on the second Sabbath; viz., 'On the second he must be confined to his house,' etc., and only on the fifth Sabbath he is as any other person."

*C.* On the first and second days the mourner must not enter the Temple mountain; on the third, however, he is allowed to enter, but must go around to the left. The following must enter to the left: A mourner, one who is under the ban, one who has a sick person in his house, and one who has sustained a loss. "Why do you enter to the left?" (the people standing about ask him). "Because I am a mourner!" And they rejoin: "The One who rests in this house may console thee!" And if he says: "Because I am in ban!" they rejoin: "The One who rests in this house may soften their hearts and they will befriend thee." So says R. Meir. Said R. Jose to him: If so, you seem to insinuate that they have not judged him rightly? But they rejoin thus: "The One who rests in this

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*B.* <sup>1</sup> It means the first week, etc., even when he goes to prayer-house in the week-days.

house, will soften thy heart, that thou mayest listen to their advice, and they will again befriend thee." To the one who had a sick person in his home they rejoined: "The One who rests in this house shall have mercy upon him!" and if the sick was his only son they should pray: "Shall have mercy upon him immediately!"

*D.* It happened to a woman whose daughter fell ill, that she ascended the Temple mount, turned to the left, and did not stir from there till she was told that her child had recovered.

*E.* To one who has sustained a loss they say: "The One who rests in this house will soften the heart of the finder, and he will return it to thee immediately!" It happened to Elazar b. Hananiah b. Hezekiah b. Gorion that he lost the Holy Scrolls, which cost him a hundred Manah.<sup>1</sup> He ascended the Temple mount, turned to the left, and did not stir till he was told that they were found. And the Temple was built by Solomon only for the purpose that everyone who should have any trouble should come and pray, as it is written [I Kings, viii. 37]: "If there be famine in the land, if there be pestilence," etc. From this we know only for individuals; when do we know that it is also for the public in general? It is written [ibid., ibid. 38]: "Of all thy people Israel." Lest one say it is also for the one who prays for children, or for riches which may not be good for him, therefore it is written [ibid., ibid. 39]: "As thou mayest know his heart, for thou thyself alone knowest the heart of all the children of men." Whatever is good for him, grant him. Whence do we know that they should not persist in their rebellion?<sup>2</sup> It is written [ibid., ibid. 38]: "When they shall be *conscious* every man of the plague of his own heart, and he then spread forth his hands toward this house." All this concerns the Israelites, but whence do we know that it concerns also the Gentiles? Therefore it is written [ibid., ibid. 41]: "But also to the stranger, who is not of thy people Israel, but cometh out of a far-off country," etc.

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*E.* <sup>1</sup> The coin Manah was of the value of a hundred Zuz. <sup>2</sup> This is to be understood thus: Whence do we know, if a rebel comes to pray that he shall be successful in his rebellion, that he shall not be listened to?

## CHAPTER VII.

A. The period of thirty days must be counted to the following: to mourning, to calender clothes, to cutting of hair, to demand debts, to a woman of handsome form, to betrothal, to marriage, to a virgin, to a widow, to a Yebamah,<sup>1</sup> to one who vowed against his wife, and to an indefinite Nazarite.

B. "*To mourning.*" How so? It is written [Deut. xxxiv. 8]: "And the children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days."

"*Calender clothes*" means all garments which come out from under the press. So is the decree of Rabbi. The sages, however, say: Colored but not white. But R. Meir said the reverse: White but not newly colored; old, however, is permitted in any case. *Funda, fascia, pileus*,<sup>1</sup> and helmets are also permitted. To give garments to be pressed is permitted within the thirty days.

The rabbis taught: "It is not permitted to calender clothes, whether new, or old ones which have just been removed from under the press, during the full period of thirty days." Rabbi, however, said: "It applies only to new ones." R. Elazar bar Simeon said: "They have prohibited new white garments only." Abayi acted in accordance with Rabbi. Rabha, however, acted in accordance with R. Eliezer bar R. Simeon.

"*To cutting of hair.*" He must not cut off the hair of his head, his mustache, his beard, or any hair of his body. A woman, however, is permitted to cut her hair after the seven days.

"*To demand debts.*" If one lends money for an indefinite period, he cannot demand it before thirty days.

C. "*To a woman of handsome form.*" It is written [Deut. xxi. 11]: "And hast a desire unto her, that thou wouldst take her to thee to wife." She must shave off her hair, and pare her nails. So is the decree of R. Meir; but R. Aqiba said: The hair must be shaved, and the nails she must let grow. Said R.

## CHAPTER VII.

A. <sup>1</sup>Yebamah is called a woman whose husband died childless, leaving living brothers [Deut. xxv. 5].

B. <sup>1</sup>All these garments have Roman names, and were used in those days, and we do not think it necessary to describe how they were made. The reader, however, will find it in "*Hamashbir*" and similar works.

Eliezer: As in both the head and nails the Torah prescribed a doing,<sup>1</sup> and as the doing what is said by the head means that the hair shall be cut off, the same is the case with the nails; but R. Aqiba said: As the doing what is said by the head is meant to make her ugly, the same is the case with the nails (and nothing is uglier than long nails). A support to R. Eliezer can be found in II Samuel [xix. 25]: "And Mephibosheth the (grand-) son of Saul came down to meet the king, and he had not dressed his feet, nor trimmed his head." A support to R. Aqiba can be found in Daniel [iv. 30]: "Till his hair was grown like eagles' (feathers), and his *nails*<sup>2</sup> were like birds' claws."

<sup>3</sup> Pin'has, the brother of Mar Samuel, was in mourning. When Samuel came to condole with him and noticed that his nails were untrimmed, he said to him: "Why dost thou not trim them?" And he answered him: "If this were the case with thee, wouldst thou disrespect the mourning to such an extent?" And it was [Eccl. x. 6] "like an error which proceedeth from the ruler." And a death occurred in Samuel's family. When R. Pin'has came to condole with *him*, the former trimmed his nails and threw the parings in his face, saying: "I see that thou dost not pay any attention to the saying: Words are ominous, as said R. Johanan. Whence is it deduced that words are ominous? It is written [Gen. xxii. 5]: "And Abraham said unto his young men," etc., "and we will worship *and come again to you*"; and it so happened that both of them returned. (Although Isaac was intended to be sacrificed.) It was understood from Samuel's action that the nails of the hand only may be cut, but not those of the feet. R. Onan bar Ta'hlipa, however, said: "It was explained to me by Samuel himself that there is no distinction made." Said R. Hyya bar Ashi in the name of Rabh: "With a nail file, however, it is not allowed."

<sup>4</sup> Rabh said (and Mar Zutra learned it in a Boraitha): "A

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C. <sup>1</sup> In the text it is termed "Maasse," and in Yebamoth (48a) "Assiyah." The meaning of both is *doing*, and Rashi there explains that, although the two above-mentioned terms are not to be found in reference to the head, R. Aqiba and R. Eliezer maintain that the cutting off of the hair is also called a doing; hence the analogy. <sup>2</sup> The verse begins with, "and from men was he driven away," and concludes that his nails were like birds' claws; hence it is not an ornament. <sup>3</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan. <sup>4</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.



couple from Hamthon once came before Rabbi and asked his permission to cut their nails in their mourning, and he permitted them to do so; and if even they would have asked his permission to trim their mustaches, he would also have permitted them." Samuel added: "They actually did ask his permission and he did permit them."

*D.* It is written [Deut. xxi. 13]: "And she shall put off the raiment of her captivity." If she was dressed in white or black which becomes her, or she had on jewelry, they must be removed from her, for the purpose of making her unhandsome. The case is only if she has declined to embrace the Jewish faith; but if she be inclined, she is dipped, is freed from slavery, and he may marry her. The purpose for which all this was done is to prevent mingling.

*E.* "*To betrothal.*" How so? It is not allowed to make the feast of betrothal within thirty days of the day of the funeral. "*To marriage.*" The feast of marriage is not allowed to be made within this period; but if everything was prepared before the death occurred of one of his or her parents he may marry, and have the first intercourse with her; but after that they must be separated for seven days. This is only in case one of his parents dies; but if his wife dies, he is not allowed to marry again until three regular festivals have passed.<sup>1</sup> R. Jehudah, however, said: Two, and he may marry at the third. This is the case when he has grown-up children; but if they are yet little ones, or he is childless, he may marry even within the thirty days. It happened that the wife of R. Tarphon died, and R. Tarphon said to her sister within the period of mourning: "Enter this house, and educate thy sister's children." Nevertheless, he had no intercourse with her until the thirty days were over.

The rabbis taught: "One is not permitted to marry during the full period of the thirty days. If he, however, mourns over his wife, he must not remarry again until three festivals shall have passed. R. Jehudah, however, allows after the first and second festival have passed." But if he is childless he may remarry at once, in order not to restrict reproduction; so also is

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*E.* <sup>1</sup> If she dies before Passover, he may marry after Tabernacles; if after Passover, he must wait till the three festivals Pentecost, Tabernacles, and Passover have passed; and so on with the other festivals.



the case if he has minor children, for they have to be brought up. It happened that the wife of Joseph the priest died, and he said to the deceased's sister while still on the burial ground: "Go and rear thy sister's children." But still he did not cohabit with her for a long while. For how long? Said R. Papa: "Until after the thirty days."

"*To a virgin.*" The period in which to complain that one has not found virginity<sup>2</sup> is limited till thirty days after the marriage.<sup>3</sup>

## CHAPTER VIII.

*A.* During three days before the interment, experts repair to the cemetery and examine the dead whether they are really dead; [and although this is the custom of other nations], there is no fear of the prohibition of the deeds of the Amorites.<sup>1</sup> It happened that one of the dead was examined (and found alive), and he lived twenty-five years after that; and to another one, that he begat five children before he died.

*B.* A canopy may be made for dead bridegrooms and brides, and either eatable or uneatable things may be hung on it. So is the decree of R. Meir. R. Jehudah, however, said: Only unripe things—viz., unripe nuts, unripe χαλλοξ, tongues of purple, and flasks of Arabian oil; but not when they are ripe, nor ripe pomegranates, nor flasks of sweet oil, as whatever hangs on the canopy, no benefit may be derived from it.<sup>1</sup> Strings of fish, pieces of meat, may be thrown before the dead bridegroom or bride in the summer,<sup>2</sup> but not in rain time; and even during

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<sup>2</sup> Deut. xxii. 14.

<sup>3</sup> Concerning a widow and the other subjects mentioned above, they are explained in their respective tracts; therefore we have omitted them here.

## CHAPTER VIII.

*A.* <sup>1</sup> Lev. xviii. 3.

*B.* <sup>1</sup> Therefore only unripe things were allowed, lest one should use them if they were ripe. <sup>2</sup> It must have been a custom at that time to throw some things which were prepared for the wedding feast. It is certainly difficult to explain, without a particular knowledge of this obsolete custom. Naumburg, however, maintains that it was done for a live bridegroom and bride; but we do not agree with him, for the reason that this is not mentioned in Berachoth, where it is enumerated what is to be done to honor the bride and bridegroom.

the summer, they must not do so with cooked fish or other eatables which will be spoiled after they are thrown on the ground. Nuts and other fruit in shells, as they are not spoiled, may be thrown at all times. There is a rule that anything which may be spoiled must not be thrown.

*C.* Likewise wine and oil may be put in a water pipe in honor of live bridegrooms and brides. As it happened to Jehudah and Hillel the sons of R. Gamaliel, when they were the guests of Ben Zakkai in Babylon,<sup>1</sup> the townspeople flooded the water pipes with wine and oil to honor them. Also the bodies of kings, and their clothes may be burned, their cattle hamstringed, without fear that it is after the usages of the Amorites. The ceremony of burning clothes and other things is performed for the corpses of kings only, but not for princes. When Rabban Gamaliel died, Aquilas the proselyte, however, burned in his honor clothes of the value of eight thousand Zuz, and when he was asked why he did so, he answered: It is written [Jerem. xxxiv. 5]: "In peace shalt thou die; and as burnings were made for thy father," etc. Was not Rabban Gamaliel more worthy than a hundred kings, for whom we have no use?<sup>2</sup>

*D.* The hair of a dead bride may be loosened; and the face of a bridegroom may be uncovered, and the marriage contract and the pen may be put by his side, without fear that so is the custom of the Amorites. There may also be put in the coffin the key and the pinkas (πιναξ) of the dead, to call the attention of others to mourn, as it happened with Samuel the Little, that his key and pinkas were put in his coffin, because he did not leave a son. And Rabban Gamaliel the Elder and R. Elazar b. Azariah lamented him, saying: "For this dead one it is meet to weep, it is proper to lament. When kings die they leave their thrones to their children, when rich men die they leave their wealth to their children, but Samuel the Little took with him the most precious thing in the world, and is gone!"

*E.* Before he died, he said: "Simeon and Ishmael are prepared for the sword, and all the remaining people for being robbed, and great trouble will follow." And he spoke this in

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*C.* <sup>1</sup> These were Jehudah the second and Hillel his brother the grandsons of Rabbi; and b. Zakkai must have been a prominent person in Babylon. <sup>2</sup> In Abodah Zarah, 11a, is stated that burning of clothes was also done for princes, and Aquilas' deed was used as a support without any explanation.

Aramaic. When this occurred, and R. Simeon b. Gamaliel and R. Ishmael were condemned to death, R. Ishmael was weeping; but R. Simeon said: I praise God that it is only two steps till I shall be received in the bosom of the righteous in the world to come, and you are weeping? And the former rejoined: Do I weep because we are going to be slain? I am weeping because we will be slain as if we were murderers and violators of the Sabbath. After they were executed, and R. Aqiba and R. Jehudah b. Ethyra were informed, they put sackcloth on their loins, rent their garments, and said: Brother Israelites! If a good thing was to come for the whole world, these two sages would certainly have been the first to receive it; and now, as they were the first to be executed, it must be only for their benefit: they shall not see the great calamities which will follow after that. Woe! "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart" [Isaiah, lvii. 1]. "He shall come (to his father) in peace, they shall repose in their resting-place" [ibid., ibid. 2].

F. When R. Aqiba was executed, and R. Jehudah b. Baba and R. Hanina b. Teradion heard of it, they also arose, put sackcloth on their loins, rent their garments, and cried: Brothers, listen to us! R. Aqiba was not slain because of robbery nor because he had not observed the Law with all his might, he was slain only for an example, as it is written [Ezek. xxiv. 24]: "Thus shall Ezekiel be unto you for a token . . . then shall ye know that I am the Lord eternal." We are sure that within a few days there will not be a place in the whole of Palestine where corpses of the people will not be lying about. It was said that scarcely had a few days passed, when a canine appetite dissipated the whole world, which lasted from that time for a twelvemonth.

G. When R. Hanina b. Teradion was seized by the government they sentenced him to the stake, his wife to the sword, and his daughter to a house of prostitution. He inquired: To what have they sentenced the poor thing (his wife)? And he was answered: To the sword! Whereupon he exclaimed the following passage: "Righteous is the Lord in all his ways" [Ps. cxlv. 17]. When she asked to what the rabbi was sentenced, she was answered: To the stake. Whereupon she exclaimed the passage: "Great in counsel, and mighty in execution," etc. [Jer. xxxii. 19]. When he was to be burned they wrapped him in the Holy Scrolls, and his daughter cried and threw herself on the ground. He said to her: My daughter! If thou weepest and throwest thyself on the ground over me, is

it not better I should be consumed by a fire which was kindled in this world than by a fire which is not kindled (Gehenna)? As it is written [Job, xx. 26]: "A fire not urged by blowing." And for the Holy Scrolls! Knowest thou not that the Torah is fire itself, and no fire can consume another? The parchment only is burned, but the letters fly away. Thou must also know that the great servants of the king are mostly beaten through the lesser, as it is written [Hosea, vi. 5]: "Therefore did I hew (them) down by means of the prophets, I slew them by the work of my mouth."<sup>1</sup>

*H.* R. Aqiba said: There is a king who has four sons. One is struck and is silent; the second rebels; the third prays for mercy; and the fourth says to his father: Strike me (because I am deserving). Abraham was struck but was silent, as it is written [Gen. xxii. 2]: "Take now thy son, thy only one, whom thou lovest, even Isaac . . . and offer him there for a burnt-offering." He ought to have said: The other day thou didst tell me: "For in Isaac shall thy seed be called" [Gen. xxi. 12]? and nevertheless it is written [ibid. xxii. 3]: "And Abraham rose up early in the morning," etc. Job was struck and rebelled, as it is written [Job, x. 2]: "I will say unto God, do not condemn me: let me know for what cause thou contendest against me." Hezekiah was struck, and he prayed for mercy, as it is written [II Kings, xix. 15]: "And Hezekiah prayed before the Lord," etc. According to others, even Hezekiah rebelled, because he said: "Did I not do what is good in thy eyes?" [ibid. xx. 3].<sup>1</sup> But David is the one who said to his father: Strike me (because I am deserving), as it is written [Psalms, li. 4]: "Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

*I.* The study of the Torah must not be interrupted till the soul is out of the dying one. When R. Simeon the son of R. Aqiba was ill,<sup>1</sup> he (R. Aqiba) did not absent himself from the college, but inquired about him through messengers. The first

*G.* <sup>1</sup>This is Leaser's translation, but the Talmud takes it literally—that the prophets were slain through the sin of Israel.

*H.* <sup>1</sup>It means that this expression is a protest against his affliction, as it was not proper to remind the Lord of His good deeds.

*I.* <sup>1</sup>See above, p. 18. The entire occurrence is repeated here at length, with some changes; therefore we leave it as it is in both places.



messenger announced that he was yet ill. He nevertheless said to the disciples: "Question!" The second announced that he was worse, and still he did not interrupt his studies. The third one announced that he was in the struggle of death, and yet he said: "Question!" till the fourth one announced the death. Whereupon he arose, removed his phylacteries, rent his garments, and said to them: "Brother Israelites, listen to me! Till now we were obliged to study the Law; now, however, we are obliged to honor the dead." A great multitude assembled to bury the son of R. Aqiba. He said: "Bring me out a bench to the cemetery." He sat down and said: "Brother Israelites, listen! (You have assembled) not because I am a sage, for there are greater sages than I; not because I am rich, for there are richer men than I. If the men of the south know Aqiba, why should the Galileans know him? If the men know Aqiba, what have the women and the children to do with Aqiba (but here is not Aqiba, here is the Torah)? Oh! your reward will be great, ye have done homage to the Law. I am consoled, and had I even seven sons and buried them all, I would be consoled, [not that one is desirous of burying his children], but because I know that he will inherit the world to come; because it is known to all that he was given to philanthropic activity, to whom a sin never reaches." (See *Yomah*, p. 138.)

Moses, who was himself righteous, and was given to philanthropic activity, the reward of the public was counted to him, as it is written [Deut. xxxiii. 21]: "He executed the justice of the Lord, and his judgments with Israel." Jeroboam the son of Nebat sinned and induced the public to sin: the sin of the public was counted to him, as it is written [I Kings, xiv. 16]: "For the sake of the sins of Jeroboam, who did sin, and who induced Israel to sin."

*J.* (There is a tradition): The reward of virtue is brought about by a meritorious person (*Sabbath*, p. 55); *e.g.*, Israel was destined to be redeemed from Egypt, as it is written [Gen. xv. 14]: "And afterward shall they go out with great substance." But as Moses and Aaron were meritorious persons, it was done through them. The same is the case with the receiving of the Torah: they would have received it without Moses, Aaron, and the generation of the desert, as it is written [Proverbs, ii. 7]: "He treasureth up sound wisdom for the righteous." The paragraph of Judges [Ex. xv. 18] would be said, even if Jethro would not appear. The same is the case with the paragraph



about the second Paschal lamb, it would be said even if the defiled men were not under the requirements of law [Numb. ix. 7]; and the same is with the paragraph of inheritance, it would be written without the daughters of Zelophchad.

*K.* The Temple also would have been built without David and Solomon, as it is written [Ex. xv. 17]: "The sanctuary, O Lord, which *Thy hands* have established." In the time of Haman, Israel would have been redeemed also without Mordecai and Esther, as it is written [Lev. xxvi. 44]: "And yet for all that, though they be in the land of their enemies, I will not cast them away, neither will I loathe them to *destroy* them utterly." But all that was done through the above-mentioned, because a reward shall be brought about by a meritorious person.

*L.* The same is true of the reverse. Israel was destined to be enslaved, even if Pharaoh should not have existed, as it is written [Gen. xv. 13]: "And they will make them serve, and they will afflict them four hundred years." Israel would worship the idols even if Jeroboam b. Nebat should not have existed, as it is written [Deut. xxxi. 16]: "And then will this people rise up and go astray." The paragraphs of the blasphemer and the violator of Sabbath would have been written even if the blasphemer and the stick-gatherer should not have existed. Israel was destined to be slain by the sword, even if the persecutors<sup>1</sup> at different times should not have existed, as it is written [Amos, ix. 10]: "By the sword shall die all the sinners of my people." Jerusalem would have been destroyed also, without Nebuchadnezzar and his associates, as it is written [Micah, iii. 12]: "Therefore for *your sake* shall Zion be ploughed up as a field, and Jerusalem shall become ruinous heaps, and the mount of the house as forest-covered high places." But all this was done through the above-mentioned, because of the rule that the chastisement for sin is dealt out through a sinner, and this was explained by Papus and Lulianus his brother to Trajan their prosecutor. (Taanith, p. 48.)

*M.* Those who are more particular in interpreting the verses of the Scriptures said: It is written [Deut. xii. 3]: "And ye shall overthrow their altars." Wherein have the wood and stone sinned (to be destroyed)? It must be only because people have stumbled through them. From this is to be drawn an

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*L.* <sup>1</sup> In Yalkut is mentioned Balaam instead of persecutors, but it seems to us to be proper as explained here.

*a fortiori* conclusion: Wood and stones which have neither virtue nor sin, neither goodness nor wickedness, because people have stumbled through them, if the Torah nevertheless decided their destruction, so much the more he who causes his neighbor to sin, and inclines him from the path of life to the path of death, deserves to be destroyed! In the same manner they explained the following: It is written [Lev. xx. 16]: "Then shalt thou kill the woman and the beast." If the woman has sinned, in what has the beast sinned? It must be only because the woman has sinned with it, it must be killed; as otherwise, whenever it would be seen in the street, people would say: "This is the beast through which so and so was stoned." And also here they draw the same *a fortiori*: An animal which has no virtue, etc., like the wood and stones, and nevertheless the Torah decided that it must be stoned—a man who causes his neighbor to depart from the path of life to the path of death, so much the more must he suffer for it.

*N.* An *a fortiori* conclusion is also to be drawn from the stones of the altar; namely, it is written [Deut. xxvii. 5]: "Thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them," and it is also written [Ex. xx. 22]: "For if thou lift up thy tool upon it, thou hast polluted it." Why, then, shall iron be unfit for the altar more than any other metal? It is because the sword is an unpropitious event and the altar is a propitious one, and a sign of curse must be removed from the thing which is forgiveness. Now, is this not an *a fortiori*: The stones of the altar which do not see, hear, talk, neither eat nor drink, but only because they made peace between Israel and their heavenly Father, the Torah said they should not be cut with iron, "Of whole stones shall they build the altar of the Lord God" [Deut. xxvii. 6], we see then that the stones which bring peace in the world must not come in contact with iron and must be whole—the students who in themselves are a forgiveness to the world, so much the more must they not come in contact with evil things, in order to be perfect before the Holy One, blessed be He?

## CHAPTER IX.

*A.* For all the relatives, one must rend his garments, also for the teacher from whom he received his study. A wise man, however, all are his relatives, all must rend their garments, all

must take off their shoes, and all may take part in the funeral meal (which used to be eaten in the street on the return from the cemetery). R. Simeon b. Elazar, however, said that rending of the garments is obligatory to all who are present at the death of a human being; the relatives, however, must rend their garments and take off their shoes, even if they are not present. Different is it when a sage dies. All who are notified of his demise must perform the mourning ceremonies.

*B.* For the death of the chief of a college all (the college men) are obliged to bare their right arm;<sup>1</sup> for the chief of a court, the left; and for the Nasi both arms are bared. When the death of R. Eliezer occurred, R. Aqiba bared both his arms, beat his breast until blood spurted from it, and cried: "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and their horsemen [I Kings, ii. 12]."

Ula said: "Lamenting is by striking on the breast, for it is written [Isa. xxii. 12]: 'They shall strike on the breast, lamenting.'" Clapping is done with the hands, and striking is done with the feet.

The rabbis taught: "One who strikes with his feet must not do so with his sandals on, but with his shoes on, in order to avert danger." R. Johanan said: "If the mourner motions his head (as if he is consoled already), his consolers need no more stay with him." R. Johanan said again: "All persons must rise from their seats on the arrival of a Nasi, except a mourner and a sick person." R. Johanan said again: "All persons are told to be seated (after they rose), except a mourner and a sick person."

*C.* For all his relatives one is not obliged to bare his arm, except for father and mother. If something is on the arms which prevents their being bared, one is not obliged to do it even at the death of his parents. It happened that when the death of R. Aqiba's father occurred, R. Aqiba did not bare his arm, though others did.

<sup>1</sup> In all cases it is praiseworthy to remove the corpse as soon as possible, excepting in the case of a dead parent, unless it is

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*B.* <sup>1</sup> As this custom is obsolete, we cannot explain its meaning and how it was done.

*C.* <sup>1</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

on a Friday or on the eve of a festival, for the removal is then only for the honor of the deceased (in order that they shall not remain unburied until after the Sabbath or festival). In all cases of death it is optional with the mourner whether to lessen his attendance to his business or not; in the case of the death of a parent, he must lessen. As to baring the shoulder, it is also obligatory in case of parents only. It happened that the father of a great man of the generation died, and the great man wanted to bare his shoulder; another great man, who equalled him and who was present at the time, wanted to do likewise (in order to show his respect), and the first one refrained from doing it (in order to prevent the other one from inconvenience). Said Abayi: "The great man of the generation was Rabbi, and the other one who was present at the time was R. Jacob bar A'ha." According to others, it was *vice versa*. In all cases of death the mourner may cut his hair after thirty days; but in the case of his parents, not before he is censured by his friends (for wearing too long hair). In all cases of death one may participate in any enjoyment after thirty days, except in the case of his parents, when he may do so only after twelve months. Said Rabba bar Hana: "In an entertainment of friends he may participate at once." In all cases one may rend his garment only one span long; over parents he must rend so much as to bare his breast. Said R. Abuhu: From what passage do we know this? From [II Sam. i. 2]: "David thereupon took hold of his clothes, and rent them." And it is known that wherever "hold" is mentioned, it is not less than a span. In all cases, even if one has ten garments on, it is sufficient to rend the upper one only; over his parents, however, he must rend all the garments he has on, except the chest protector. And there is no distinction made between male and female. R. Simeon b. Elazar, however, said: "A woman rends the undergarment, places the rent part on her back, and then rends her upper garment." In all cases it is optional whether to tear asunder the outside hem or not, but over parents it is obligatory. R. Jehudah, however, said: "If the hem is not torn asunder, it is not considered rending at all."<sup>2</sup> Said R. Abuhu: "What is the reason of R. Jehudah's statement? It is written [II Kings, ii. 12]: "And he took hold of his clothes, and rent them in two pieces." The superfluous

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<sup>2</sup> In order to understand the explanation hereof of Rashi, a thorough knowledge of the ancient cut of garments is required, which we leave to the historian.



statement, "in two pieces," indicates that it must be rent so that it should look as if torn in two pieces. In all cases the rent may be slightly sewed together after the seven days, and regularly mended after the thirty days; but over parents it may only be slightly sewed together after thirty days, but never regularly mended. Women, however, may sew it together at once, for the sake of decency. When Rabbin came from Palestine, he stated in the name of R. Johanan: "Over relatives it is optional whether to rend by hand or with an instrument; over parents, by hand only." R. Hyya bar Abba said in the name of R. Johanan: "Over relatives the rent is made in the house; over parents, even outside of the house." A prince once died. Said R. Hisda to R. Hanan bar Rabha: "Stand on an elevation and rend your garments, so that every one will see it." Over the death of a scholar, the right shoulder is bared; over that of a chief of a court, the left one is bared; over that of a Nasi, both shoulders are bared.

The rabbis taught: When a scholar dies, his college closes. When a chief of a court dies, all the colleges in the city in which he resided close, and those who come to the prayer-house to pray change their usual seats, so that those who have seats on the north benches take seats on the south benches, and *vice versa*. But when a Nasi dies, all the colleges close and the members of the congregation assemble in the prayer-house, and only seven read in the Law, and leave. R. Joshua b. Kar'ha said: "That does not mean that they shall walk around in the streets, but that they must remain in their houses and keep silent." And no ordinance or Agada should be declared in the mourner's house. It was said, however, of R. Hananiah b. Gamaliel that he had declared ordinances and Agada in the house of a mourner.

The rabbis taught: "And the following rent garments may not be mended: garments rent over the death of parents; over the death of one's instructor in Law; over a Nasi, chief of the court; over ill-tidings; over blasphemy; the Holy Scrolls which were burned by fire; the cities of Jehudah; the Temple; and over Jerusalem. And one may rend over the destruction of the Temple and add another rent (at the same place) over Jerusalem."<sup>3</sup> R. Helba in the name of Ula of Birah, quoting R.

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<sup>3</sup> All this is adduced from biblical passages which we deem unimportant to quote here.



Elazar, said: "One who beholds the cities of Jehudah in their desolate state, says [Isa. lxiv. 9]: 'Thy holy cities are become a wilderness,' and rends his garment; when he beholds Jerusalem in her desolate state, he says [ibid., ibid.]: 'Zion is become a wilderness, Jerusalem a desolate place,' and rends; when he beholds the Temple in its desolate state, he says [ibid. 10]: 'Our holy and our beautiful house where our fathers praised Thee is burned up with fire; and all our costly things are become ruins,' and rends."

<sup>4</sup> The Boraitha stated: "One may rend over the Temple and add another rent," etc. There is a contradiction from the following Boraitha: "Both the one who heard it and the one who saw it, as soon as they reach Zophim they rend their garments, and they do so *separately* over the Temple and over Jerusalem?" This presents no difficulty: The first Boraitha relates to a case where he beheld the Temple first; the second, where he beheld Jerusalem first (Rashi explains the first case that he was under such circumstances that he could not see Jerusalem first, as for instance if he were in a closed carriage).

The rabbis taught: "And all (rents) may be slightly sewed together, hemmed, gathered (a sort of stitch), and stair-stitched, but not regularly mended." Said R. Hisda: "Mending is not allowed only when it is done in the fashion of Alexandria" (for it then looks as if never rent).

The rabbis taught: The original rending is a span long; the additional, three fingers. Such is the dictum of R. Meir; R. Jehudah, however, said: "The original rending is three fingers, and the additional a trifle." Said Ula: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Meir as regards the original rending, and according to R. Jehudah as regards the additional one." We have learned the same also in a Boraitha in the name of R. Jose.

<sup>5</sup> Rending which is not done in the moment of excitement (immediately after the occurrence of the death) is not considered rending at all. Was it then not stated that Samuel rent all the twelve different garments he had on when he was informed of the death of Rabh, saying: "The man whom I always feared (for his sharpness) has passed away"? And was it not also stated of R. Johanan that he rent thirteen woollen garments when he was

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C. <sup>4</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan. <sup>5</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

informed of the death of R. Hanina, saying: "The man whom I always was in dread of has passed away" (and in these instances it was not immediately after the occurrence of the death)? In case of death of rabbis it is different, because, their teachings being always fresh in memory, the moment of excitement is whenever the information of their death reaches. Rabhin bar Ada said to Rabha: "Thy disciple R. Amram taught the following Boraitha: A mourner during all the seven days must wear the rent part in front, and if he changes clothes he must rend again. On the Sabbath he must remove the rent part from the front to the back; if he, however, changes his clothes for the Sabbath, he must not rend again." (Hence we see that one must rend, although after the moment of excitement?) Rabha answered him: "This applies only to parents, but over other relatives it is different."

<sup>6</sup> May those rents be mended? The father of R. Oshiya and Bar Qappara differ: One holds they may, and the other holds they may not.

<sup>7</sup> Rabha said: A mourner may walk around in his easy-dress in his house (in private).<sup>8</sup>

D. If he was informed of his father's death, and he rent his garments, and afterward he was told that it was not the father but the mother, his duty is fulfilled; and also *vice versa*. If after he has rent for his parents he was told that it was not his parents but one of his relatives, this rending is sufficient. If, however, he was informed of the death of a relative, and after he has rent he was told that it was not his relative but one of his parents, he must rend again.

The rabbis taught: "If one is informed of the death of his father and he made a rent, and then he was informed of the death of his son and he made an additional rent, the lower rent may be mended but not the upper one. If, however, he was informed of the death of his son first, the upper one may be mended but not the lower one. If he was informed of the death of his father, mother, brother, and sister at the same time, he may make one rent for all. R. Jehudah b. Bathyra, however, said: "One rent over his father and mother, and another over

C. <sup>6</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan. <sup>7</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

<sup>8</sup> The term in the text for "easy-dress" is *אונקלי*, which has several different meanings. See our "Phyl. Rit.," p. 65. Here, however, it seems to mean a gown worn in the house.

all the others; for an additional rent should not be added to the one over his parents." What is the reason? Said R. Na'hman bar Itz'hak: "Because the law of additional rending does not apply to the case of parents." Said Samuel: "The Halakha prevails according to R. Jehudah b. Bathyra." Could Samuel say so? Did not Samuel decide that the Halakha prevails, in regard to mourning, according to the one who is lenient? Mourning is one thing and rending is another.

<sup>1</sup> How far down must one rend? As far as his navel. According to others, as far as the breast. And although there is no direct support for that from the Scripture, there is nevertheless a hint for that in [Joel, ii. 13], "And rend your *heart*, and not your garments."

The rabbis taught: If a sick person has a case of death in his family he must not be informed of the fact, for it may cause him distress; and no rending is done in his presence, and the women are silenced (to keep any knowledge from him); and a minor's garments are rent for the purpose of moving others to pity him; and rending is done over the parents of one's wife out of respect to the latter. R. Papa said: "We have learned in Tract Great Mourning: 'But one (mourner) may not place a babe in his lap, for it may cause him to smile and thus be disliked by others.'"

"*The funeral meal is not to be taken except on a couch standing up properly.*" The rabbis taught: "One who comes to the mourner's house, if he was intimate with the mourner, he takes the funeral meal on a lowered couch; if he were not, on a couch standing up properly." Rabha had a death in his family, and Abba bar Martha, who was also known as Abba bar Maniumi, came to console him. Rabha put up the couch, Abba bar Martha lowered it, and Rabha remarked: "How little sense this young scholar has!"

The rabbis taught: "A mourner who travels from one place to another, if it is convenient to him to lessen his attendance to his business he shall do so; if not, he shall attend at least in company with other traders."

The rabbis taught: From what time on must the couch be lowered? From the time the deceased is removed from the house. Such is the dictum of R. Elazar. R. Joshua, however, said: "From the time the top-stone is placed on the grave."

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D. <sup>1</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

When R. Gamaliel the Elder died,<sup>2</sup> as soon as he was removed from the house R. Elazar told the mourners to lower the couches; when the top-stone was placed on the grave, R. Joshua told them to do so, and they answered: "We have already done so by the direction of the elder teacher."

The rabbis taught: "From what hour on may the couches be put in proper condition on Friday? From the hour of the Min'ha prayer on." Said Rabba bar Huna: "One must not, however, sit down on them until sunset, and on Saturday evening he must again lower them, although he has but one more day to mourn."

The rabbis taught: "One must lower not only his own couch, but all the couches in the house, even if they numbered ten and were placed in different places; and even if four brothers mourn over the death of a fifth brother, they all must lower their couches. If there is, however, one couch used exclusively for placing on it utensils, that one need not be lowered."

The rabbis taught: "One (a mourner) who sleeps on a stool, a large mortar, or on the floor has not fulfilled his duty." Said R. Johanan: "For he has not performed the duty of lowering the couch."

*E.* If one bought a garment which was rent for a death, he must not sew it together, unless he knows that the rent is such that it may be sewed together. If one sells such a garment, he is obliged to acquaint the buyer what kind of a rent it is. All garments of which their rents must not be sewed together, must not be sold to Gentiles; neither can they be turned downward and sewed together. Such is the decree of R. Simeon b. Elazar. The sages permit it. If one comes to a dying person in a rent garment, he is robbing the dead.<sup>1</sup> It is a greater sin to rob the dead than the living, because one can always appease the latter

<sup>2</sup> It seems to us that it should read Gamaliel of Jamniah, as R. Gamaliel the Elder was his grandfather, and Eliezer and Joshua were colleagues of the former. Heilprin in his "Seder Hadoroth" brought Abraham Zacutta's opinion that R. Eliezer and R. Joshua were present at the death of both Gamaliel the Elder and his grandson of Jamniah without any remarks, which seems to us impossible. Moreover, if R. Eliezer and R. Joshua existed in the time of the Elder, they could have been little children only.

*E.* <sup>1</sup> The Talmud elsewhere says that he robs the living and the dead, because the people who see the rent in his garments may think that he rent it then, and to impose upon the people is considered a robbery.



and make restitution, which he cannot do to the dead. The same may be said of him who honors his parents after they are dead: it is more praiseworthy than when he honors them when they are alive, as in that case it may be said that he does so because he fears them, or because he expects to inherit from them; but when he honors them after they are dead, it is only for the sake of heaven.

The rabbis taught: One who wears in the presence of a deceased person a garment which has been rent over another deceased, is imposing on both the deceased and the living. R. Simeon b. Gamaliel said: "One who borrows a garment of another for the purpose of visiting his sick father, and informing the borrower of the purpose for which the garment is to be used, does visit his father but finds him dead, he must rend, but may mend it and return it to the owner, paying him the difference in value caused by the rending. But if he has not informed the owner of the purpose, he may not rend.

*F.* If one has rent for one dead, and he be resuscitated, if he dies immediately after, this rent is sufficient; but if he live some time, one must rend again.

*G.* One who saves the garment which was upon the dead is robbing the dead: this is only with the garments which are with him in the coffin, but not those which are with him in bed; nevertheless, the heirs must be told not to save even the garments which were with him in the bed.<sup>1</sup> One who adds garments to a corpse more than necessary, he transgresses the precept, "Thou shalt not destroy" [Deut. xx. 19].<sup>2</sup> So is the decree of R. Meir. R. Eliezer b. Zadok said: He makes the corpse homely.<sup>3</sup> Rabban Gamaliel said: Also, they add vermin.

*H.* Said R. Nathan: The garments in which the corpse is buried will be renewed with him in resurrection, as it is written [Job, xxxviii. 14]: "She is changed as the sealing-clay, and (all things) stand as though newly clad."

*G.* <sup>1</sup> It seems to us from Sanhedrin, 48a, that the Talmud advises that all the garments which were with the dead in bed shall be used for the purpose of honoring the dead, as their custom was to pour wine before the dead. <sup>2</sup> All things which were fit for use for human beings, or for their benefit, the Talmud does not allow to destroy, without a purpose, and calls the one who does so "a transgressor" of the negative commandment cited in this passage. <sup>3</sup> It means, because when they are rotten it adds to the homeliness of the corpse.



## CHAPTER X.

*A.* A mourner is exempt from reading Shema, from prayers, and all the precepts commanded in the Torah, during the time that the corpse is in his house. If one desires to be rigorous with himself, he shall not do so, for the honor of the dead. When the time for reading Shema approaches, all the people read; he, however, must be silent. When they rise to pray, he shall acknowledge the justice, saying: "Lord of the universe! I have sinned against Thee; a little only of my indebtedness was called in, although I deserve much more. May it be Thy will to close up our breaches<sup>1</sup> and condole us!" R. Simeon said: He also prays for the departed soul.

*B.* The mourner must eat with his neighbors. If he has none, he shall eat in another room; if he has none, he shall make a partition of ten spans' distance; if he has nothing to make a partition with, he shall turn his face and eat. He must not lean<sup>1</sup> and eat, neither must he eat meat nor drink wine; he must not pronounce the meal benediction, nor can he be included where three are required in pronouncing it, neither may others pronounce it singly or in three for him. All this is only on week-days; on the Sabbath, however, he may eat and lean, and is allowed all the things mentioned above. As Rabban Gamaliel said: On the Sabbath a mourner is not considered as a mourner at all.

<sup>2</sup> R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh said: "A mourner on the first day must not eat of his own bread, for the Merciful One said [Ezek. xxiv. 22]: 'And the bread of other men shall ye not eat.' " Rabba and R. Joseph (when they were in mourning) used to exchange their meals between themselves. R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh said again: "When a case of death occurs in a town, all the inhabitants of the town are prohibited from doing any work." R. Hamnuna happened to be in Drumtha,

## CHAPTER X.

*A.* <sup>1</sup> According to the translation of Leeser, and meaning that the doors shall be closed for further bereavements.

*B.* <sup>1</sup> According to the custom in the Orient to eat leaning, and as we do at the *Seder* ceremony on the first eve of Passover. <sup>2</sup> *Gemara* from Moed Katan.

and he heard the horn announcing the occurrence of a death. When he subsequently noticed certain persons doing some work, he said to them: "Let these persons be under the ban, for is there not a death-case in town?" They answered him: "There are special societies for burying the dead." And he thereupon said to them: "If such is the case, you are absolved." R. Jehudah in the name of Rabh said again: "One who laments excessively over a deceased may be sure to have to do so over another deceased." There lived a woman in the neighborhood of R. Huna who had seven sons. Once one of them died, and she was weeping very much. R. Huna sent her a message not to do so, but she paid no attention to it, and R. Huna sent her the following message: "If you listen to what I say, well and good; if not, you may as well prepare a shroud for another of your sons." Subsequently another son died, and one by one all of them died. He then said to her: "Now prepare a shroud for yourself." And she also died.

C. The corpse must not be carried out when near the time of reading Shema: it must be done an hour sooner or later. When the bearers of the hearse go out, those in front of it, as their services are required, are exempt from reading Shema, but are prohibited to wear their shoes; those who are behind it, however, as their services are not required, are obliged to read Shema and are allowed to wear their shoes. Both are exempt from prayer and phylacteries. If on their return from the burial there is yet time to begin and finish Shema before standing in line, they first read, and stand in line afterward; otherwise they stand in line first, and read and pray afterward. The inside row which sees the mourner is exempt from it; the outside, however, is not. R. Jehudah said: Even if there is but one row, if they stand for the sake of the mourner, they are exempt; but if they stand for the sake of their own honor, they are not. The people who come to console, if they see the mourner they are exempt, otherwise they are not.

D. R. Simeon b. Elazar said: Rabban Gamaliel had a prepared sepulchre at Jamnia, wherein they used to deposit the corpse and lock the door. After that they came to stand in line around the mourner and consoled him; through this they exempted the public from doing these duties, and subsequently the corpse was brought up to Jerusalem.

The rabbis taught: At first in the houses of the rich (mourners), silver and gold baskets and white glass were used;

and in those of the poor, willow baskets and colored glass were used, and the poor felt ashamed; and it was enacted that only willow baskets and colored glass should be used by all. At first they used to leave the face of the deceased uncovered and used to carry him on an expensive bier if he belonged to the rich class; but they used to cover his face (for their faces grew dim from hunger) and carry him on a common bier if he belonged to the poor class, and the poor people felt ashamed. So it was enacted that all should be covered and be carried on a common bier. At first they used to carry the rich in braided beds, and the poor in common ones, and the poor felt ashamed, and it was enacted that all should be borne in a common bed. At first spices used to be placed at the side of those who died from bowel-troubles, and those who suffered from that disease while still living used to feel ashamed; and it was enacted that spices should be placed at the side of every deceased person out of respect to those who were suffering from that disease while still living. At first the expenses accompanying the burial of a deceased person were more burdensome and painful to his relatives than the death itself, and they used to leave the corpse and run away, until Rabban Gamaliel, the Nasi, directed that he be buried in flaxen garments; and it became customary with the people to bury the dead in flaxen garments. Said R. Papa: "And at present, even in a flaxen garment of the value of one Zuz."

When the grave is closed, the mourner wraps up his head:<sup>1</sup> when ready for the line, he bares it and exempts the others from doing it; if he steps outside the line, he covers it again; when he comes home and others come to visit him, he bares it again and exempts the others from doing it.<sup>2</sup>

*E.* When a death occurs in the family of a sage or a disciple of a sage, they may come and discuss about the laws of mourning before him. If they err, he may set them right half-heartedly; but himself must not propound a question. He may speak himself, if he so desires, or he may permit another to

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*D.* <sup>1</sup> See above, p. 27. <sup>2</sup> The literal translation of the text is to cover and to bare the head, and it may be that the custom was already in vogue, to honor those present in baring the head, as Paul required to bare the head in the house of prayer. We, however, translated "wrap up," in accordance with the text, page cited, and in accordance with other commentators.

speak for him. It happened that the son of R. Jehudah died, and the latter permitted another to speak for him; so also did R. Jose the Galilean when his son died. It happened to R. Aqiba that his son died, and he sat and lectured all day; so also did Rabbi when his son died. If it is necessary to discuss about something, they must begin concerning the laws of mourning, and then branch off to other matters, and finish again in regard to mourning. In Judah, on the Sabbath they greet the mourner on entering and leaving the college, to show that no mourning exists on the Sabbath.

## CHAPTER XI.

*A.* When two deaths occur in town, the one that died first is buried first; and if the first has to be left over night, the second is buried. And although it is said: Whoever leaves his dead over night transgresses a negative commandment,<sup>1</sup> still, if it is done for the purpose of digging a grave, to prepare shrouds, or to enable his outside relatives to attend to his funeral, it does not matter. If a master and a pupil die on the same day, the master is buried first; a pupil and a common man, the pupil is buried first. If both are masters, or pupils, or common men, the one that died first is buried first. A man and a woman, the woman is buried first, because the latter is more liable to become disgusting.

*B.* These are the differences between a man and a woman:

## CHAPTER XI.

*A.* <sup>1</sup>The negative commandment is Deut. xxi. 23, although it is spoken only of one hanged by judicial decree. It seems to us, however, that it only means that the corpse must be taken away from the house in which it died, and not that it must be buried on the same day; and this we do for two reasons: first, because it would be a contradiction to what is said above that they deposited the corpse in a prepared grave, and also that they examine the deed the first three days; and second, if it meant that it must be buried the same day, the Talmud would say that he transgresses a positive commandment also, as further on the verse says, "But thou shalt surely bury him on that day." However, the expression "negative commandment" is taken from the corrections of Elias Wilna, who took it from the Talmud elsewhere.



A man may be left in the street to hold an oration over him, but not a woman; the greatest man of the city may accompany a man, but he is not to be troubled for a woman. R. Jehudah said: He may; the funeral meal is taken over a man, but not over a woman. Said R. Jehudah: If she has little children, the meal is taken with them.

*C.* They do not stand in line, nor is the mourning benediction said after the burial of the first, but after the second; then they do all this, and console, and exempt the public from doing so. Two mourners may not be consoled together, unless they are in the very same position in the community. The same is the case with two corpses to be carried in one hearse: An accident happened in the city of Usha wherein a house tumbled down and killed two male children and one female child, and R. Jehudah ordered that all three should be carried together. The male children were put on one side, and the female on the other, and they lamented over them: "Woe, woe, bridegroom! Woe, bride!" Two funeral orations may not be held in one town at the same time, unless there is enough attendance for both. The same is the case with two brides, they must not be married at the same time, unless there is enough attendance for both. R. Simeon b. Elazar said: Even in this case it is not advisable to do so, because there may be enmity.<sup>1</sup>

*D.* The corpse must be set aside for a bride,<sup>1</sup> because the honor of the living precedes that of the dead. A bride, however, must be set aside for a king, for the honor of the king. King Agrippa, however, stepped aside for the sake of a bride, and he was praised by the sages. His remark was: "I have time to put on my crown every day, and she can put on her crown only once in her lifetime."

*E.* The study of the Law (in the colleges) must not be interrupted for the sake of a burial or a bride. Abba Saul, however, said: The performance of meritorious deeds has preference over study, as was the custom of R. Jehudah. Whenever he saw a funeral or a bridal party coming, he glanced at the disciples, tell-

*C.* <sup>1</sup> Enmity may be caused between certain persons and the bride, why they went to the other wedding and not to hers. He, therefore, differs only in the case of a marriage, but not in the case of a funeral.

*D.* <sup>1</sup> It means when they meet together at the gate or on a narrow street.



ing them: The performance supersedes study. If one of the parents of a married couple die, the woman must not paint nor adorn herself, and her husband must not protest against it. Sweeping, washing glasses, and making of the beds is not considered as labor to a mourner.

The rabbis taught: "The mourner's house may be swept and besprinkled, and the dishes, glasses, flasks, and jugs may be rinsed, but no gum to be put on coal, or spices, may be brought to the mourner's house." Must it not? But has not Bar Qappara taught: "No benediction is pronounced over gums (to be put on coal) or spices in the mourner's house"; from which it is inferred that only the benediction is not pronounced, but they may be brought there? These present no difficulty: the first statement relates to the place where the *mourner* is sitting; the statement of Bar Qappara, to the place where the *consolers* are sitting.

*F.* If one leaves five sons, who were at his table, but each one slept at his own house, each one must lower his couch in his own house, otherwise the performance is made only in the house which is used for sleeping. If, however, there were five rooms, and all were used, it must be done in all. One lodging in another's house, if he is intimate with his host, he must lower his couch, otherwise he need not. One who is on a journey and hears of the death of one of his near relatives, if he can lower his couch without any difficulty, he may do so. One may turn over his couch on two benches, or on four stones, no matter if there were even five mattresses on top of it, and was four spans above the ground, provided the legs of the couch are in the air. This, however, is after the burial; but when the corpse is in the house, he may not sleep even on an upturned couch.

*G.* The performance of lowering the couch is sometimes for six days, and sometimes for five, four, and three days, no more, no less. How so? If the death occurred on a week-day, it is for six days; if in the afternoon of the eve of Sabbath, it is for five days; if a festival succeeds this Sabbath, for four days; and if the two days of New Year succeed this Sabbath, it is for three days.<sup>1</sup>

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*G.* <sup>1</sup> The Mishna was taught before the existing calendar was made, as since then New Year cannot fall on Sunday.

## CHAPTER XII.

*A.* Renting on a death, the mourning of seven and thirty days, begin from the day of burial, or from the day he was informed, if he was not present. For whom one is obliged to rend at the time of death, he is also obliged when gathering his bones from one grave to be put into another. Also the law of sewing together the rent applies to that for gathering bones; the mourning, however, is only for one day, and the night belonging to that day does not belong to the day of mourning.

The rabbis taught: A recent information makes customary both the seven and the thirty days; a remote information, however, makes customary only one day's mourning. What is a recent, and what a remote information? A recent—if within thirty days; a remote—if after thirty days. Such is the dictum of R. Aqiba. The sages, however, hold either case makes customary both the seven and the thirty days. Said Rabba bar bar Hana in the name of R. Johanan: "Whenever it is found that the majority is rigorous and the individual is lenient, the Halakha prevails according to the majority, with the exception of this case here, in which, although the majority is rigorous, still the Halakha prevails according to the individual" (R. Aqiba). As Samuel stated: "In the case of mourning the Halakha prevails according to the one who is lenient." R. Hanina received information of the death of his father from the city of Husai, and he consulted R. Hisda. The latter said to him: "A remote information causes mourning for one day only." R. Nathan bar Ami received information of the death of his mother from the same place, and he consulted Rabha, who said to him: "Are you not aware of what was said in regard to a remote information?" And the former objected: "Have we not learned that this is so only in regard to the five cases of relatives whom one is bound to bury (son, daughter, brother, sister, and wife); but as regards father and mother, the seven and thirty days must also be observed?" And he answered him: "The Tana of the Boraitha is an individual (in his opinion), and we do not concur with him." As we have learned in the following: It happened that the father of R. Zadok died in the city of Ginsak, and he was informed after three years, and he went and asked Elisha b. Abajah and the Elders who were with him, and they told him he shall keep seven

and thirty. The same occurred when the son of R. A'hiya died in exile, and his father has performed for him the mournings of seven and thirty (hence the above Boraitha is in accordance with the individual, and not according to R. Aqiba. And from the following we can see also that the Halakha does not prevail according to Elisha b. Abajah, namely,) Rabh was the son of the brother of R. Hyya on his father's side, and also the son of his sister on his mother's side. And when Rabh came to Palestine, R. Hyya asked him: Is thy father alive? And he answered: My mother is alive. Then R. Hyya asked again: Is your mother really alive yet? And he answered: My father is alive.<sup>1</sup> Then R. Hyya told his servant: Take off my shoes; but a little later you shall take my garments in the wash-house. From this we have learned three things: First, that a mourner must not wear shoes; second, that a remote-information mourning is customary for only one day; and, third, that a part of the day is considered as a whole day.<sup>2</sup>

*B.* There were different societies in Jerusalem, and each of them had to attend to different things. One was to attend mourners; one to attend marriages; one to attend circumcision or redeeming of a first-born male child, and one for removing the bones from one grave to another. The attendance to a bride's house precedes a mourner's house; circumcision or the redeeming of a first-born male child precedes the removal of bones. The ancient pious, however, preferred to go to a house of mourning instead of the house of a bride, as it is written [Eccl. vii. 2]: "It is better to go to the house of mourning than to go to the house of feasting; inasmuch as that is the end of all men, and let the living lay it to his heart," as whoever follows the bier, knows that this will happen also to him.

<sup>1</sup>We have learned in a Boraitha: R. Meir used to say: It is written [Eccl. vii. 2]: "It is better to go to the house of mourn-

## CHAPTER XII.

*A.* <sup>1</sup>In the ancient times one was very careful not to bring a bad message; and even when asked, as the Talmud prohibits it, he would give evasive replies. <sup>2</sup>This is inferred from what R. Hyya told his servant—to bring his garments into the wash-house, that, after he had mourned a part of the day, on the remaining part he might do all he liked.

*B.* <sup>1</sup>*Gemara* from Moed Katan.

ing than," etc., "and let the living lay it to his heart," which means, let the living lay to his heart matters connected with one's death—viz., when he laments over him, that he will also be lamented over; when he buries him, that he will also be buried; when carrying him, that he will also be carried; and when eulogizing him, that he will also be eulogized. According to others one who is modest, and troubles himself with burying the dead, will be elevated by Heaven, as it is written [Prov. xxv. 7]: "For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up higher, than that thou shouldst be put lower in the presence of the prince, which thy own eyes have (often) seen."<sup>2</sup>

The rabbis taught: When the sons of R. Ishmael died, four elder sages came to console with him; viz., R. Tarphon, R. Jose the Galilean, R. Elazar b. Azariah, and R. Aqiba. Said R. Tarphon to the other three: "You must know that he (R. Ishmael) is very wise and he is well versed on Agada, and therefore none of you must intrude when the other will be speaking." Said R. Aqiba: "And I will be the last one." R. Ishmael began: "His sins have increased, his mournings have succeeded one another, and he has inconvenienced his instructors once and twice." R. Tarphon then arose and said: "It is written [Lev. x. 6]: 'But your brethren, *the whole house of Israel*, may bewail the burning,' etc. If this was ordered over the death of Nadob and Abihu, who have observed only one commandment, as it is written [ibid. ix. 9]: 'And the sons of Aaron brought the blood unto him,' etc., so much the more so over the death of the sons of R. Ishmael." R. Jose then followed and said: "It is written [I Kings, xiv. 13]: '*And all Israel* shall mourn for him, and bury him.' If so much was done for Abiyah the son of Jeroboam, who has performed one kind deed only, as it is written [ibid., ibid.]: 'Because there had been found in him some good thing,' so much the more so over the death of the sons of R. Ishmael." [What was the good thing? R. Zera and R. Hanina bar Papa: one says that he suspended his office and made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem on the feasts; the other says: he has abolished the guards which were established by his father to prevent the pilgrimage to Jerusalem.] R. Elazar b. Azariah then began: "It is written [Jerem. xxxiv. 5]: 'In peace shalt thou die; and as burnings were made for thy fathers,' etc., if so much

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<sup>2</sup> We must leave this without any explanation, as there are no commentaries for this besides Eidlís in his "Hidushe-Agadoth," and it is too complicated to be translated here.



was done for Zedekiah the king of Judah, who performed only one meritorious thing in that he ordered to bring up Jeremiah from the pit filled with mire, so much the more so over the sons of R. Ishmael." Finally, R. Aqiba began: "It is written [Zech. xii. 11]: 'On that day will the lamentations be great in Jerusalem like the lamentation at Hadadrimmon in the valley of Megiddon.' [And R. Joseph said: If not the translation of Jonathan of this passage, namely: On that day will the lamentations be great in Jerusalem, like the lamentation for A'hab bar Omri, who was killed by Hadadrimmon bar Tabrimmon, and like the lamentations for Josiah bar Amon, who was killed by Pharaoh the Lame in the valley of Megiddon, I would not know its meaning.] If so much over A'hab the king of Israel, who has done only one good thing, as it is written [I Kings, xx. 35]: 'And the king was stayed up in his chariot against the Syrians' (to prevent the defeat of Israel), so much the more for the sons of R. Ishmael." Rabba said to Rabba bar Mari: Zedekiah was promised that he would die in peace, and still it is written [Jerem. xxxix. 7]: "And the eyes of Zedekiah did he blind?" (How was the promise to die in peace fulfilled?) He answered him: "So said R. Johanan: (It was fulfilled) that Nebuchadnezzar died in his time." Rabba further said to Rabba bar Mari: Josiah was promised [II Kings, xxii. 20]: "Therefore, behold, I will gather thee unto thy fathers, and thou shalt be gathered unto thy grave in peace." And still it is written [II Chron. xxxv. 23]: "And the archers shot the king Josiah?" And he answered him: "So said R. Johanan: (The promise was fulfilled in that) the Temple was not destroyed during his life-time."

<sup>3</sup> R. Johanan said: "The consolers are not permitted to speak consolation before the mourner engages in conversation, as it is written [Job, ii. 13]: "But no one spoke a word unto him," etc.; [ibid. iii. 1]: "After this time Job opened his mouth," etc.; and only [ibid. iv. 1]: "Then answered Eliphaz," etc. (These quotations are according to Na'hmanidus.) R. Abbuhu said: Whence do we know that the mourner takes his seat at the head of the consolers? It is written [ibid. xxix. 25]: "I chose their way for them, and sat as chief," etc., "as the mourners being comforted" (read **יְנַחֵם**). Mar Zutra said: "From the following passage [Amos, vi. 7]: 'And the noisy banquet of those who were



stretched out shall pass away?'<sup>4</sup> R. Hama bar Hanina said: Whence do we know that a bridegroom takes his seat at the head of the guests? It is written [Isa. lxi. 10]: "As a bridegroom decketh himself with elegant attire." (The Hebrew reading: "Ke'hathan yechaehn pēār," "Hathan" meaning a bridegroom, and "yechaehn" having the same letters as "cohen," a priest), as a priest sits at the head, so also does a bridegroom. R. Hanina said: "The separation of the soul from the body is as difficult as the removal of a knotty rope from the mast." R. Johanan said: "It is as difficult as the removal of a knotty rope holding the masts of two ships together."

The bones and the veins must not be taken apart when gathering them; it must not be feared, however, that this will happen while gathering them. All bones one may handle while gathering, except that of his parents, which must be handled by others. Such is the decree of Rabbi Johanan b. Nuri; R. Aqiba, however, said: As the bones are not allowed to be gathered till the flesh is all destroyed, and the form is not recognized any longer, it does not matter even if they are his parents'.

C. The bones of two corpses may be gathered together, but he shall keep them separate in a casket; he shall put one's in one corner, and the other's in another. So is the decree of R. Aqiba. R. Johanan b. Nuri, however, said: There is not any need for keeping the bones separated, as the basket in which they will be buried will finally be rotten, and the bones will be mixed again; if, however, he desires that they shall be separate, he shall bury them in caskets of cedar.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> The Hebrew text reads: "Vesor mirsah seru'him." The letter Samech has the same sound as the left-pointed Shin, and therefore "vesor" has the same meaning as if written with a left-pointed "Shin," viz., "a chief." "Mirsah" is given the same meaning of "Mirseah" [Jer. xvi. 5], a mourner—*i.e.*, the mourner became chief of the seru'him, those who were stretched out (the comforters), by taking his seat at the head.

C. <sup>1</sup> There is difficulty in understanding the meaning of R. Johanan b. Nuri, as there are many errors in the text, which were corrected by different commentators. What we understand is, that in their time they had different baskets or coffin-like boxes, *Aphikarsin*, in which bones were gathered and buried with them; and R. Aqiba maintains that although it is allowed to put together the bones of two bodies in one basket, they must nevertheless not be mixed together; and R. Johanan b. Nuri maintains that it is no use separating them, and advises what one shall do when he wishes them to be kept separate.

*D.* The bones may be sprinkled with wine or oil, according to R. Aqiba; with oil and not wine, because wine destroys them, according to Simeon b. Nanes; the sages, however, maintain that they may not be sprinkled with any of these, but cover with dust.

*E.* Said R. Eliezer b. Zadok: So my father commanded me: When I will die, you shall first bury me in a valley, then gather my bones, and put them in a cedar casket; but you shall not handle them yourself, and so I did. Johanan entered the grave and gathered (the bones) and spread over them a chest protector, and then I entered, rent my garments over them, and covered them with a sheet. I did to my father as he has done to his. It is not allowed for a man to wrap and tie up the corpse of a woman; a woman, however, may do so to a man.<sup>1</sup> The same is the case when a woman suffers in her intestines, a man must not examine nor attend her; a woman, however, is allowed to do so to a man.

*F.* Abba Saul b. Botnith said in his will to his sons: Bury me at the feet of my father, and take off the Tzitzith<sup>1</sup> from my *palium*.

<sup>1</sup> *G.* With all relatives one is allowed to bathe, except with his father, father-in-law, his stepfather, the husband of his sister, and the instructor from whom he received his wisdom. R. Jehudah, however, said: If his father was old or sick he may enter the bath-house and bathe him, for it is in his honor.

A hearse is not used unless the head and the greater part of the corpse are there. R. Jehudah said: The backbone and the skull are considered as the greater part of the body.

*H.* It happened with the son of R. Hanina b. Teradion, who associated with bad company and became a robber and was executed, when, after three days, he was found all swollen, his remains were put in a cage and that in a hearse, and was brought

*E.* <sup>1</sup> Because a man is more excitable than a woman.

*F.* <sup>1</sup> Tzitzith—the fringes (see Numb. xv. 38)—and *Palium* in our times is called Tallith, in which the show-fringes are put in, and are worn during prayer.

*G.* <sup>1</sup> Speaking above of men who must not see the body of a woman, the Mishna tells also that it is not customary for a son to see his father or his father-in-law, whom he must respect, naked. As to the husband of his sister, however, there must be another reason—lest he see some deformity in his body, and inform his sister of it.

in the city. They wanted to lament him for the sake of his parents, but the father did not let them do so; he instead exclaimed on him the following [Prov. v. 11-14]: "While thou moanest at thy end, when thy flesh and thy body are coming to their end, thou sayest: 'How have I hated correction, and how hath my heart rejected reproof, while I hearkened not to the voice of my instructors, and to my teachers I inclined not my ear; but little more was wanting and I had been in all (kinds of) unhappiness in the midst of the congregation and assembly.'" His mother also exclaimed over him the following passage [ibid. xvii. 25]: "A foolish son is a vexation to his father, and bitterness to her that hath borne him." His sister also exclaimed the following [ibid. xx. 17]: "Bread of falsehood is pleasant to a man, but afterward his mouth will be filled with gravel stones."

### CHAPTER XIII.

*A.* One who gathers or guards the bones is exempt from reading Shema, prayer, and all the precepts commanded in the Torah, and if he desires to be rigorous with himself, he must not do so, for the honor of the dead. *R. Johanan b. Nuri*, however, said: He should step outside a distance of four ells and read. *Ben Azai* said: If they were with him in a boat he should remove them to another place and read. *R. Itzhak* said: Only from the bones of relatives he is exempt; from strangers, however, he is not. *R. Simeon* said: He is exempt only on week-days, but not on Sabbath. *R. Nathan*, however, said: He is exempt only when the bundle (of the bones) is on his shoulders, because the duty of guarding it is on him, but not of prayer.

*B.* One who removes bones or the Scriptures from one place to another, must not place them in a wagon, a boat, nor on a beast under his seat: however, in order to preserve them from thieves or robbers, he may.<sup>1</sup>

*C.* It is not allowed to pass through a cemetery with the phylacteries on, nor the Scriptures in the hand, as it is considered disrespectful to the dead.<sup>1</sup>

### CHAPTER XIII.

*B.* <sup>1</sup> Corrected from Berachoth.

*C.* <sup>1</sup> The reason is explained in Berachoth, because the dead are exempt from all the commands given in the Law.

*D.* One finding a corpse in a grave must not move it, unless he is certain that the place was only borrowed for him. One finding bones on marshy ground, must put them in a grave. Such is the decree of R. Aqiba. The sages, however, say: He must not move them. One who finds bones in a grotto or a cavity must not move them. A corpse or his bones must not be moved from one place to another, even if they are equal in esteem, much less if the other place is lower; he may, however, do so from a lower to a higher place. However, if he moves them to a place on his estate, he is allowed to do so, even if the former place is more esteemed.<sup>1</sup>

Two corpses must not be buried in one grave, nor a corpse with bones, and *vice versa*. R. Jehudah, however, said: If they used to sleep together when alive, they may be buried together.

*E.* A building over a grave which was vacated, no benefit may be derived from it; if, however, it was excavated in a rock, and also the grave itself, when it was vacated a benefit may be derived from it; nevertheless, it must not be used for low purposes, such as a cow-house, straw-barn, etc. A grave which was dug for a person who was yet alive may be sold; but if for one who was already dead, it may not. The same is the case with monumental stones.

No benefit may be derived from a vacated coffin. If it is made of stone or clay, it must be broken, and if of wood—burned. Boards of the cemetery must not be moved from their place.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

*A.* A cemetery must not be considered vilely; *e.g.*, no aqueduct may be drawn through it, nor a path made; no cattle must feed there, nor may one use it as a *compendiarius*, nor pick wood or grass therefrom. If he has picked he must derive no benefit from it, and if he picked them only to clean the grave, he must burn them on the same place.

*B.* Though inheritances are movable from place to place and changed from one family to another, with graves, however, it is different; they are not movable or changeable from one family to another. A new grave may be measured, divided, and sold, but

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*D.* <sup>1</sup> It means to say that the estate belonged to the deceased, as it is agreeable to one to be buried on his own grounds.



not an old one; there is, however, a new one which must be considered as old, and *vice versa*, namely: When there were in an old grave even ten corpses, but were buried without the permission of the owner, it must be considered as a new grave and may be measured, divided, and sold; if, however, it was with his permission, even if it was a miscarriage, it must be considered an old one, and nothing may be done with it.

C. No occupancy must be considered with the graves of the exiles; *e.g.*, in time of a pest or war, the graves are not secured to the corpses by occupancy.<sup>1</sup> R. Simeon b. Gamaliel said: Miscarriages do not acquire their graves, the same is the case with all who are buried without the permission of the owner. A woman who has inherited a grave, she and her offspring are to be buried in it. Such is the decree of R. Meir; R. Jehudah, however, said: She, but not her offspring; however, he owns that all her offspring who existed during her life, may be buried with her. If her father requires she should be buried in his grave, and her husband says in his, the father has the preference; if she has children, then the husband has the preference; if her will states that she shall be buried with her children, it should be done so. If the father says she should be buried with her husband, or *vice versa*, she is buried with her husband, because it is his duty to feed, redeem, and bury her, and he must provide all the necessities, such as a hearse, flutes, and mourners, and where an oration is held, he must provide also that. If he declines to do all that, it is done by the court on his account against his will.

D. There are three kinds of graves: One that is found,<sup>1</sup> one that is known, and one which injures the public. The first is permissible to vacate, and if it was vacated, the place is clean, and a benefit may be derived from it; the second is not permissible to vacate; if it was vacated, the place is unclean,<sup>2</sup> and no

#### CHAPTER XIV.

C. <sup>1</sup>The Hebrew term for occupancy is *Hazakah*, which means a surety—that is, if the property is in the possession of one a long time it is sure to be his, even if he has no documents for it.

D. <sup>1</sup>It means that if it was found that there was a corpse buried without the permission of the owner, the place, after it is vacated, is considered clean, because no precautionary measures were taken for such a one. <sup>2</sup>A precautionary measure was taken to consider all graves unclean, even after their vacation, lest one use the ground when they are not yet vacated.



benefit may be derived from it; and the third is permissible to vacate; the place is clean,<sup>3</sup> but no benefit may be derived from it.

*E.* A cemetery which surrounds the city on three sides, must be vacated; if on two sides, if they were opposite they can remain; if they were joined, they must be removed.<sup>1</sup> All graves may be removed for the necessity of the community. *R.* Aqiba, however, said: With the exception of those of a king and a prophet, as there was the grave of the prophetess Huldah, in Jerusalem, and it was never touched. His contemporaries rejoined: That is no proof, as there was a cavern from the grave to the brook Kidron, which drew off the uncleanness.<sup>2</sup>

*F.* One who sells the graves of his family, (it is considered as if) he did nothing. The same is the case if he sold the place of lamenting. The rabbis taught: One who sold his grave,<sup>1</sup> the way to it, or standing-place, and the house of lamenting, his family may come and reclaim them against his will, because it is a disgrace to the family that they should be sold to someone else.

*G.* The rabbis taught:<sup>1</sup> There must be not less than seven standings and sittings after the burial,<sup>2</sup> to signify the seven times "vanity" is mentioned in Ecclesiastes [i. 2]: "Vanity of vanities, saith Koheleth, vanity of vanities: all is vanity." Said *R. A'ha* the son of *Rabha* to *R. Ashi*: Explain me how they used to do,<sup>3</sup> and he rejoined: As we have learned in the following *Boraitha*: *R. Jehudah* said: Formerly in *Jehudah* they have

*D.* <sup>3</sup> For the sake of the public, no precautionary measure is to be taken for this.

*E.* <sup>1</sup> Taken from *Tract Nazir*, *Palestinian Talmud*, as the *Mishna* here is very complicated, after all the different corrections of the commentaries. <sup>2</sup> There is a law concerning defilement, that a hole of one span which reaches the air draws off the uncleanness. This will be explained in *Tract Teharoth*.

*F.* <sup>1</sup> It was the custom then that each family had cares for the purpose of burying there the members of the family. The standing place means where the consolers stood or sat after the burial, and it was near the grave, and there was also a place where the lamenters stood.

*G.* <sup>1</sup> Transferred from *Baba Bathra*, 100*b*. <sup>2</sup> The custom was that when they returned from the burial they used to walk a few steps and then sit down and console the mourners or weep for the dead, and then rise and go on; and to repeat this seven times, so that they should remember the life of a human being is but vanity of vanities. <sup>3</sup> As in our place it is not customary.

made not less than seven standings and sittings for a dead body, and the funeral director used to say: "Arise, dearests, arise!" and "Sit down, dearests, sit down!" Said the sages to him: If that was all, let them do so also on the Sabbath.<sup>4</sup> The sister of Rama bar Papa was the wife of R. Ivjah, and she died. He made for her a standing and a sitting. Said R. Joseph: He has erred in two things. First, this do only the relatives of the second degree, who are not obliged to mourn, and he was one of the mourners; and, secondly, this is to be done only on the day of burial, and he did so on the day after. Said Abayi: He has also erred in this: It is usually done near the cemetery, and he did this in the city. Said Rabha: He erred also in this: It is only done where it is customary, and in his place it was not customary at all. An objection was raised: It is said above that the sages said to R. Jehudah: "If that was all, let them do also on the Sabbath." Now if this is to be done only in the cemetery, and on the first day, can this occur on Sabbath? The answer was: They meant to say, in a city which is near the cemetery, and when the consolors returned from the funeral which ended at twilight.

Whoever reminds a mourner of his dead after twelve months are over, is to be blamed for renewing his wound. Said R. Simeon b. Gamaliel: One whose wife died and has married again within a twelvemonth, one who wishes to talk to him about his dead, shall do so in the market, but not in his house.

All eatables may be brought to the house of a mourner—oval-shaped bread, meat, and fish; and if an assembly does that, also herbs and pulse. Rabban Simeon b. Gamaliel said: Where it is customary, even cooked food.

*H.* Ten goblets of wine have the sages ordered in the mourning house: three before eating, to give an appetite; three during the meal, to soften the food in the stomach, and four after the meal, for the four blessings contained in the after-meal benediction. Afterwards they have added four more: one for the sake of the sections of the city who have occupied themselves with the burial; one for the sake of the presidents of the congregations (for their advancing money for the sake of the burial of the poor); one for the Temple (to console for its destruction),

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*G.* <sup>4</sup> If that was all, without lamentation, it could be done also on the Sabbath, if they returned from burial on the eve of Sabbath at sunset.

and one in memory of Rabban Gamaliel (who was the first to command to be buried in linen garments, as said above). When the sages have seen that they became drunk, they have restored the original number.

One who pronounces the meal benediction in the house of a mourner, what shall he say in the fourth blessing? "The good One who does good to all." R. Aqiba, however, said: "The truthful Judge, the Ruler of His creatures. O give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; because unto eternity endureth His kindness."<sup>1</sup>

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*H.* <sup>1</sup> This passage is brought here at the conclusion of this tract, as it is usual to conclude each tract with a good expression.

END OF TRACT EBEL RABBATHI (GREAT MOURNING) AND THE  
WHOLE SECTION OF FESTIVALS.



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